

IMPLEMENTING AN INTERCESSORY PRAYER PROGRAM
TO SHIFT FROM LOCALLY FOCUSED TO GLOBALLY MINDED
IN A KOREAN IMMIGRANT CHURCH

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ABSTRACT

IMPLEMENTING AN INTERCESSORY PRAYER PROGRAM TO SHIFT FROM LOCALLY FOCUSED TO GLOBALLY MINDED IN A KOREAN IMMIGRANT CHURCH

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The context of this project was a small Korean immigrant church in Hopkins, Minnesota, with an anxiety about the church's future existence. The method was a six-week training on the biblical and theological understandings of the church, the biblical principles of intercession, and the intercession together for nations, world churches and missionaries. The project validated the hypothesis that participants in intercessory prayer training would shift their focus from local challenges to embracing their role as a praying church within the global community, ultimately reducing anxiety. This qualitative phenomenological study suggested that reduction of anxiety for their church's future resulted.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you, Heavenly Father, Jesus Christ, and Holy Spirit for loving me, for saving me from my sin, and for giving me eternal life. This DMin project was possible because God helped me and strengthened me to continue in prayer. I give all the glory, honor, and praise to God.

I am greatly appreciative of my contextual associate, Rev. Won Geun Lee and Korean Evangelical Methodist Church of Minnesota that helped to implement and to complete this project. The members of the congregation were amazingly supportive and encouraging. Without their help, I would not have been able to finish this DMin project.

I would like to thank my mentors, Bishop Young Jin Cho, Dr. HiRho Park, and Dr. Young Bong Kim, and my faculty consultant, Dr. Woo Min Lee, for their prayers, wisdom, guidance, encouragement, and support. I owe them a great deal; they have influenced this project in invaluable ways. I would also like to thank mentor assistant and peer associate, Director Yoon Sun Shin, for her tremendous help when I needed it. I also owe a great deal to my outstanding professional associates, Dr. Douglas Fox, Dr. Hogun Kim and Dr. Sangdae Park. Their prayers and support have helped me achieve my goals and made this project much better than it would have been otherwise.

Finally, I would like to thank my wife, Megan and my three children, Kenneth, Tiffany and Christy. This Doctor of Ministry work was made possible by their love, their prayers, their support, and their patience shown to me during this journey.

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to all those who wish to grow in the knowledge and understanding of intercessory prayer in their lives and in their churches. May your lives and your churches be blessed by the Spirit of intercession and the power of prayer.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AD	Anno Domini
B/AA	Black/African Americans
C.E.	Common Era
DMin	Doctor of Ministry
GMC	Global Methodist Church
IC	Interpersonal Communication
ICP	Interpersonal Christian Prayer
KEMC-MN	Korean Evangelical Methodist Church of Minnesota
MDiv	Master of Divinity
MN	Minnesota
NC	North Carolina
NKJV	New King James Version Bible
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version Bible
OPT	Optional Practical Training
KUMC-SJ	Korean United Methodist Church of South Jersey
UMC	United Methodist Church
United	Refers to United Theological Seminary
U.S.	United States
USA	United States of America

Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God

—Romans 8:26-27, NKJV

INTRODUCTION

The goal of this project was to reduce the anxiety that the members of the Korean Evangelical Methodist Church of Minnesota (KEMC-MN) have about the future existence of their church by using intercessory prayer training to shift their focus from local challenges to the role of the church in the global church. The KEMC-MN is a small Korean immigrant church. The members of the KEMC-MN have anxiety about the church's future existence due to changes in local economies, changes in immigrant societies, and the impact of the pandemic and the United Methodist Church (UMC) disaffiliation that hinder the church's numerical growth. The hypothesis of this Doctor of Ministry (DMin) project was that if members of the context immigrant church participate in a six-week intercessory prayer training, then their focus on local difficulties will be changed to a focus on their role as a praying church in the global faith community and their anxiety about their church's future existence will be decreased.

Chapter One of this thesis outlines the context of the KEMC-MN, as well as my spiritual autobiography. In addition, this chapter presents the changes in local economies, changes in immigrant societies, and the impact of pandemic and disaffiliation that affected the church's numerical growth and financial situation. Finally, this chapter shows how my strength and the church's problem interacted with each other and resulted in this DMin project.

Chapter Two presents the primary biblical foundation for the project. The biblical foundation supporting my DMin project was focused on Mark 11:15-17. In this passage, Jesus said, “My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations” (Mark 11:17). Jesus brought the Old and New Testaments together by quoting directly from Isaiah 56:7. Through this, Jesus spoke about what the church is and what the church should do. Jesus showed that God’s intended identity and the role of the church had not changed.

The church that God intended through the Bible is “a house of prayer for all nations.” So, Jesus showed that the church, the house of God, must become “a house of prayer for all nations.” Jesus also showed that those who come to the house of prayer must become people of prayer. This biblical foundation brought awareness to the members of the KEMC-MN about the importance of prayer in the church. In particular, it made church members aware of how important, over and against general prayer, for the nations intercessory prayer is. This biblical foundation provided a biblical basis for why church members should intercede for the world churches and the missionaries.

Chapter Three presents the historical foundation for the project: the Moravian intercessory prayer movement. The prayer movement of the Moravian community lasted for one hundred years starting in 1727. Surprisingly, this prayer movement was not just a regular prayer movement, but an intercessory prayer movement for world missions. This Moravian Christian intercession movement made an amazing history of sending around three hundred missionaries all over the world by 1791.

Moravian Christians fled persecution in Moravia and became asylum seekers in Herrnhut, land provided by Count Zinzendorf. They formed a community of faith amid many local difficulties but focused on the Kingdom of God through intercessory prayers

for world missions and the missionaries. My DMin project was to divert the perspective of the members of the KEMC-MN from focusing on local difficulties focusing on the role of the church that plays in the global faith community through intercessory prayers for the nations, the world churches, and the missionaries. The Moravian 100-year intercessory prayer movement that was globally and missionally focused provided a strong historical foundation.

Most important in relation to my DMin project, I wanted to show how the Herrnhut Moravian Christians were able to overcome their local difficulties through intercessory prayer. The life of the Moravians at Herrnhut was a life of refugees. They had been displaced from their homeland and moved to a foreign land; however, the difficulties of refugee life did not dampen their faith. They did not become discouraged or give up. They prayed. They did not pray for themselves but interceded for the will of God, for the Kingdom of God, and for the world missions. This became an amazing intercession movement that lasted one hundred years.

Chapter Four presents the theological foundation for the project. The theological foundation that supported my DMin project was focused on ecclesiology. Ecclesiology is a theological exploration of the church. Ecclesiology provides a strong theological foundation to support my DMin project.

The problem presented in the KEMC-MN was that the members feel anxious about the church's future existence due to the changes in local economies, the changes in immigrant societies, and the impact of pandemic and disaffiliation that hindered the church's numerical growth. To solve this problem, the church members must change their thinking from locally focused to globally focused. To do so, they must have a

theologically correct ecclesiology. Through intercessory prayer with a theologically correct ecclesiology, the church members would develop a positive perspective of playing a very important role as a praying church on the global level.

Chapter Five presents the interdisciplinary foundation for the project. The interdisciplinary foundation supporting my DMin project focused on interpersonal communication. In terms of communication studies, intercessory prayer is defined as a spiritual two-way communication with God. Understanding how interpersonal communication occurs between people is an important foundation for our understanding of our spiritual two-way communication with God.

Listening is the key to interpersonal communication. A person who listens well to what the speaker is saying can communicate well. However, a person who does not listen to what the speaker is saying and only talks about what he or she has to say communicates poorly. Just as listening is more important than speaking in interpersonal communication, it is more important to hear God's voice than to speak in intercessory prayer. When praying for the world churches and the missionaries, if the church members realize God's heart toward the nations, the world churches and missionaries and know God's will, their intercessory prayer will be more effective.

Chapter Six presents the analysis of the implemented DMin project. This DMin project consisted of six sessions that met weekly for six weeks. The participants met every Wednesday, starting with the first session on Wednesday, September 13, 2023. The project sessions were held via Zoom meeting from the first to the fifth session, and the sixth session was held in person in the church sanctuary. The order of the first five sessions was the welcome, opening prayer, lecture, group discussion about the content of

the lecture, and intercessory prayer for the nations, the world churches, and missionaries.

During these six weeks, there were nine lessons. The lessons were based on the four foundational chapters of the thesis: “Biblical,” “Historical,” “Theological,” and “Interdisciplinary.” The sixth session was not a lecture, but a hands-on model of an intercessory prayer meeting and practicing the order of the intercessory prayer meeting together. All participants put into practice what they had learned in the previous sessions by following the model intercessory prayer meeting.

Various components were used to collect the data, test the hypothesis, and evaluate the results for this project. Before the first session I collected the: participant’s general questionnaire on prayer life and pre-project questionnaires. Following the project, I collected post-project questionnaires and conducted personal interviews. I also collected observations from group discussions and participants’ non-verbal communication. The data from the post-project survey, personal interviews and group discussions proved that while the church’s situation had not changed, the participants’ anxiety about the future of the church had decreased. The participants had also moved from a local to a global mindset regarding prayer. These results fully support my hypothesis.

CHAPTER ONE

MINISTRY FOCUS

Introduction

How can the members of the Korean Evangelical Methodist Church of Minnesota transform from aiming for a numerically large church to a spiritually healthy church? What is a spiritually healthy church and what does it look like? The definition and the shape of a spiritually healthy church must originate from Jesus Christ, the owner of the church, the head of the church, and the founder of the church. What did Jesus call the church to be, spiritually? What did Jesus say the healthy church should do?

In Mark 11:15-19, Jesus was very angry as he entered the temple in Jerusalem. But why was Jesus so angry? Jesus gives the reason for this when he says, “My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations. But you have made it a den of thieves.”¹ Here, Jesus is quoting the prophet Isaiah, “Even them I will bring to My holy mountain, and make them joyful in My house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be accepted on My altar; for My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations” (Is. 56:7). The Heavenly Father spoke through the prophet Isaiah of the church as “the house of prayer of all nations” (Is. 56:7); Jesus reaffirmed the church as “the house of prayer of all nations” (Mk 11:17).

¹ Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are from the New King James Version®. Copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

In both the Old and New Testaments, God spoke about what the church, the house of God, is like and what it does. The church should be a house of prayer for all people. As a house of prayer for all people, the church members should be the people who pray for all people. If the Korean Evangelical Methodist Church of Minnesota truly becomes a “house of prayer for all people” and its members become people who pray for all people, then they will be transformed from a church that aims to be numerically large into a church that aims to be spiritually healthy.

The context for examining this concept of transforming a church into a spiritually healthy church is the Korean Evangelical Methodist Church of Minnesota (KEMC-MN). The current situation of KEMC-MN is examined, especially in view of the demographics of Hennepin County, Minnesota, where the church is located. This DMin project stems from the intersection of the needs of the church with my calling as a Methodist pastor.

Context

Demographic Descriptions

Most members of the KEMC-MN live within a 20-mile radius of Hopkins, where the church is located. Hopkins is a suburb of Minneapolis and is located approximately ten miles west. Hopkins is one of the forty-five cities or towns that make up Hennepin

County. Hennepin County is one of the eighty-seven Minnesota counties² and Minneapolis is the largest city in the county and in Minnesota.³

According to the U.S. Census based MissionInsite report, the 2010 population within a 20-mile radius centered on the KEMC-MN was 2,276,213.⁴ The projected population for 2022 is 2,505,032, which is a growth of 228,819 people in twelve years.⁵ The population is projected to grow by 4.8% in the next five years (2027) and by 2.9% in the next ten years (2033).⁶

In 2010, there were 161,029 Asians living within a 20-mile radius centered on the KEMC-MN.⁷ In 2022, the Asian population is estimated to be 191,768, or 7.66% of the total population.⁸ In the past 12 years, from 2010 to 2022, the Asian population grew by 30,739 people.⁹ Five years from now, in 2027, the Asian population is expected to increase by 12,440 to a total of 204,208, according to a U.S. Census-based

² “Minnesota Counties by Population,” Minnesota Demographics, accessed August 28, 2023, https://www.minnesota-demographics.com/counties_by_population.

³ “Overview of Hennepin County,” Hennepin County, Minnesota, accessed August 28, 2023, <https://www.hennepin.us/your-government/overview/overview-of-hennepin-county>.

⁴ “The ExecutiveInsite Report, Prepared for: Korean Evangelical Methodist Church of Minnesota, Study area: 20 mi Radius from 717 Minnesota State Highway 7, Hopkins, Minnesota 55305, United States,” Published August 23, 2023, MissionInsite, <https://missioninsite.com/>, 2.

⁵ “ExecutiveInsite Report,” 2.

⁶ “ExecutiveInsite Report,” 2.

⁷ “ExecutiveInsite Report,” 3.

⁸ “ExecutiveInsite Report,” 3.

⁹ “ExecutiveInsite Report,” 3.

MissionInsights report.¹⁰ As a percentage, the Asian population is expected to remain roughly the same 7.66% over the next five years.¹¹

The number of Black/African Americans (B/AA) increased by 34,773 from 219,088 in 2010 to 253,861 in 2022.¹² This number corresponds to 10.13% of the total population.¹³ In five years (2027), there is predicted to be an increase of 12,835 in the B/AA population to 266,696.¹⁴ As a percentage, the B/AA population is expected to remain roughly the same 10.13% over the next five years.¹⁵

The Hispanic/Latino population in the study area was 46,241 in 2010.¹⁶ By 2022, it is estimated to increase by 17,672 to 168,001.¹⁷ In five years (2027), it is projected to increase by another 7,893 to 175,894.¹⁸ In 2022, the Hispanic/Latino population represents 6.71% of the total population.¹⁹ The Hispanic or Latino population is expected to remain at about the same percentage for the next five years.²⁰

¹⁰ “ExecutiveInsite Report,” 3.

¹¹ “ExecutiveInsite Report,” 3.

¹² “ExecutiveInsite Report,” 3.

¹³ “ExecutiveInsite Report,” 3.

¹⁴ “ExecutiveInsite Report,” 3.

¹⁵ “ExecutiveInsite Report,” 3.

¹⁶ “ExecutiveInsite Report,” 3.

¹⁷ “ExecutiveInsite Report,” 3.

¹⁸ “ExecutiveInsite Report,” 3.

¹⁹ “ExecutiveInsite Report,” 3.

²⁰ “ExecutiveInsite Report,” 3.

The White population of the study area was 1,666,273 in 2010.²¹ By 2022, it had increased by about 120,847 to 1,787,120.²² This figure represents 71.34% of the total population, so Whites continue to be the majority.²³ In five years (2027), the white population is expected to increase by 89,746 to 1,876,866.²⁴ However, the White percentage of the total population is expected to decrease 1.69% from 2010 to 2027.²⁵ Only the white population is predicted to show any significant change in percentage over the next five years and that is attributed to the smaller percentage growth of the white population in comparison to the minority populations. In summary, the population in the twenty miles around the KEMC-MN is growing, including the Asian population.

Historical Description

The Korean Evangelical Methodist Church of Minnesota was founded in Hopkins, a suburb of Minnesota. They held their first worship service on May 6, 1979.²⁶ The church's pioneering years were turbulent, as the founding pastor returned to Korea after only one year. The second senior pastor was hastily hired, only to leave after half a year.

²¹ “ExecutiveInsite Report,” 3.

²² “ExecutiveInsite Report,” 3.

²³ “ExecutiveInsite Report,” 3.

²⁴ “ExecutiveInsite Report,” 3.

²⁵ “ExecutiveInsite Report,” 3.

²⁶ “A Brief History of Korean Evangelical United Methodist Church of Minnesota,” Korean Evangelical Methodist Church of Minnesota.

The church started to settle down with the third senior pastor who started in 1981. The number of Korean immigrants increased rapidly during this time, which led to a great growth of the church. When the third senior pastor retired and the fourth senior pastor was appointed in 1993, the church started to hold English worship services and the church's growth reached its peak.

The church reached an attendance plateau where it was no longer growing after the fourth senior pastor's departure in 1997.²⁷ After the arrival of the seventh senior pastor in 2004, conflicts arose within the church, and the church went through a period of trial as a large number of members left. In November 2009, the church relocated to Hopkins, the neighborhood where it is currently located.²⁸

During the period of the eighth and ninth senior pastors, despite the difficult situation of the church, they worked to rebuild ministries such as Sunday school and youth group. The church gradually recovered from the crisis. It is noteworthy that during this period, many important leaders of the church left the church, and new members from other churches in the neighborhood filled the gaps.

In July 2017, the tenth senior pastor was appointed.²⁹ As the church prepared for its fortieth anniversary, it had a vision and determination to prepare for the next forty years of its existence. They especially prepared for revitalization of the English-language congregation and the discipleship of the younger generation.

²⁷ "A Brief History of Korean Evangelical United Methodist Church of Minnesota."

²⁸ "A Brief History of Korean Evangelical United Methodist Church of Minnesota."

²⁹ "A Brief History of Korean Evangelical United Methodist Church of Minnesota."

With the onset of the pandemic in 2020, the church was forced to suspend services. As a result of the pandemic, the church's attendance dropped dramatically, and in May 2022, the tenth senior pastor left the church, choosing to remain with the United Methodist Church. The church decided to begin the disaffiliation process in January 2023, leaving the United Methodist Church and joining the Global Methodist Church in July of that year. On August 1, 2023, the eleventh senior pastor was hired. This DMin project was conducted starting in September 2023. The many changes prior to this project contributed to the anxiety church members would feel about their future existence.

Changes in Local Economies

The Minneapolis suburb area where the church is located has been home to the headquarters of large corporations including 3M, Honeywell, and General Mills. 3M Corporate Headquarters is located in Maplewood east of Minneapolis. 3M began in 1902 in Northern Minnesota and is a Fortune 500 Company.³⁰ 3M made an announcement that beginning in June 2023, 1,100 jobs would be cut at its corporate headquarters.³¹

Honeywell began in 1885 in Minneapolis.³² In 1999, Honeywell merged with Allied Signal and moved its headquarters to Morris Plains, New Jersey.³³ The re-location

³⁰ “3M History,” 3M, accessed August 28, 2023, https://www.3m.com/3M/en_US/company-us/about-3m/history/.

³¹ Alexandra Simon, “3M Layoffs will Include 1,100 Employees at Corporate Headquarters,” *Kare 11*, May 2, 2023, accessed August 28, 2023, <https://www.kare11.com/article/news/local/3m-layoffs-corporate-headquarters-maplewood-minnesota/89-642697de-d0a6-48e9-93e0-b39137fd8e34>.

³² “The History of Honeywell,” Honeywell, accessed August 28, 2023, <https://www.honeywell.com/us/en/company/our-history>.

³³ “Some Dismay in Honeywell’s Hometown,” *The New York Times*, June 8, 1999, accessed August 28, 2023, <https://www.nytimes.com/1999/06/08/business/some-dismay-in-honeywell-s-hometown.html>.

of its corporate headquarters resulted the loss of 1,000 local jobs in Minneapolis.³⁴ In August 2019, Honeywell moved its headquarters from New Jersey to Charlotte, NC.³⁵

General Mills was founded in 1866. General Mills Corporate Headquarters is located in Golden Valley, a suburb of Minneapolis just six miles north of Hopkins.³⁶ In 2021, General Mills announced its layoff plans. Between 700 and 800 jobs were cut in the U.S. and Canada.³⁷

In the community where KEMC-MN is located, there were more Korean immigrants working for large corporations like 3M, Honeywell, and General Mills than there were self-employed Korean immigrants. However, layoff plans at these corporations have caused many Korean immigrants to move out of the area.

Changes in Immigrant Societies

Minnesota's Korean-American community is experiencing major changes. The number of people immigrating to Minnesota from South Korea has decreased dramatically. International students from Korea continue to come to Minnesota because the University of Minnesota offers low tuition rates and a special benefit for international students that allows them to pay in-state tuition if they work on campus. However, after

³⁴ “Some Dismay in Honeywell’s Hometown.”

³⁵ “The History of Honeywell.”

³⁶ “Our History,” General Mills, accessed August 28, 2023, <https://www.generalmills.com/about-us/our-history>.

³⁷ Kristen Leigh Painter, “General Mills Tells Employees 700 to 800 Job Cuts are Expected in U.S. and Canada,” *Star Tribune*, June 4, 2021, accessed August 28, 2023, <https://www.startribune.com/general-mills-tells-employees-700-to-800-job-cuts-are-expected-in-u-s/600064729/>.

graduating from the University of Minnesota, Korean students leave the area for graduate school or work in other states.

The Korean immigrants who work at 3M, Honeywell, and General Mills are highly educated. They send their children to top universities out of state, not in Minnesota. With their children going off to out-of-state colleges and the large corporations laying off workers, second-generation Korean children are not generally staying in Minnesota.

Minnesota is known for its long winters with very cold weather. The average temperature in Minneapolis is 8° Fahrenheit in January and 70°F in July.³⁸ From November through April, it is generally very snowy, with an average of 30 to 70 inches per year.³⁹ Because of this weather, many Korean immigrants move to warmer areas like California and Florida when they retire.

Impact of Pandemic and Disaffiliation

With the onset of the coronavirus pandemic in 2020, all church services and activities were suspended. The church's pre-pandemic attendance of about 100 adults dropped dramatically to about 20 by the end of December 2022. The rapid decline in attendance made it difficult to maintain the church, and the Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church considered closing the church.

³⁸ "Climate in Minnesota: Normal Daily Temperatures," St. Cloud State University, accessed August 28, 2023, [https://www.stcloudstate.edu/internationaladmissions/accepted-next-steps/climate.aspx#:~:text=Snow%20is%20the%20main%20form,76%20cm\)%20in%20the%20southeast.](https://www.stcloudstate.edu/internationaladmissions/accepted-next-steps/climate.aspx#:~:text=Snow%20is%20the%20main%20form,76%20cm)%20in%20the%20southeast.)

³⁹ "Climate in Minnesota."

In May 2022, the Global Methodist Church (GMC) was founded as a new denomination as the United Methodist Church (UMC) began to split. United Methodist churches could consider whether to remain with the UMC or disaffiliate. The senior pastor of KEMC-MN left the church to accept an appointment to another church as he decided to remain with the UMC. In early October, the leadership team made the decision to begin the disaffiliation process to leave the UMC and move to the GMC. The leadership team met almost weekly to discuss and pray about the disaffiliation. They also held informational meetings for the congregation about the disaffiliation every two weeks. Every member of the congregation was encouraged to pray daily.

In late January 2023, a vote was taken to formally begin the disaffiliation process, with 100% of the congregation voting in favor. In late April, a second vote on disaffiliation was taken, with 100% of the congregation voting in favor with one abstention, confirming the decision to disaffiliate from the UMC. In May, the Annual Conference Session of the UMC approved the disaffiliation. The cost of disaffiliation was \$95,000 to the Annual Conference. The church did not have this amount of money because many members had left the church during the pandemic. The church building was too old and too large, causing utility bills of over \$2,000 per month. The church's savings account was also depleted.

The church was in real financial trouble. Along with financial stresses, a dramatic decline in membership from the pandemic, a plan to close the church by the Annual Conference, and the disaffiliation process caused members' anxiety about the future of the church to reach new heights. In the middle of this high anxiety, a man learned of the church's struggles and loaned the church \$40,000. This spurred the congregation to take

up a special offering to fund the church's exit fund. Of the members, 98% participated in the offering. Within a month, the \$95,000 needed to disaffiliate was provided.

After leaving the UMC, the congregation unanimously voted on July 16, 2023, to change its denomination to GMC. Subsequently, they changed their name from Korean Evangelical United Methodist Church of Minnesota to Korean Evangelical Methodist Church of Minnesota.⁴⁰ They had entered the disaffiliation with many struggles, high anxiety, and much uncertainty. Yet they also entered with regular prayer. The result was God intervening in marvelous ways to give the church a future and a hope.

Ministry Journey

Growing up in Korea

I was born in Namwon, Jeollabuk-do. Jeollabuk-do is located in the southern part of South Korea. My father and mother were Catholic but not devout believers. Rather than believing in Jesus, they just considered it a religion. Even though my parents went to the Catholic Church, they still offered sacrifices to their ancestors. My mother told me that I was baptized as an infant in the Catholic Church.

My father liked to gamble. Eventually, because of his gambling, he had to sell all his land, lost all of his possessions, and became deeply in debt. My family could no longer live in our hometown due to the debt, so we moved to Seoul. I was six-years-old when my family moved to Seoul.

⁴⁰ “Church Update Announcements,” accessed August 28, 2023, <https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=676110441218060&set=pb.100064573306497.-2207520000&type=3>.

After moving to Seoul, my father did not have any special skills, so he started working at a construction site. Later he became a carpenter. My family moved a lot because of my father's job. After a construction job was completed, we moved to another construction site. Another reason my family had to move often was that my mother had a restaurant for the workers at the construction sites. Since we moved along the construction site, my family lived in a tent next to the construction site. I vividly remember how embarrassing it was. All my schoolmates have decent homes, but I had to live in a tent. My father was also an alcoholic, which made home life very difficult at times.

When I was in middle school, I was a very mischievous kid. I was very popular at school because I was so playful and fun. However, because my family was very poor, I could not pack my lunch properly. So, at lunchtime, I stole often from my friends' lunch boxes. I went to church frequently with my friends to their various churches, especially during Easter and Christmas. When I went to church, they gave me food and a lot of gifts, so it was fun and kept me going to church.

At the end of my sophomore year in high school, my father started getting sick. He was diagnosed with esophageal cancer. My father's health continued to deteriorate as he underwent surgery and was undergoing chemotherapy. My father eventually passed away less than a year later. For me, this was a very important event that made me think about life and death. As I watched my father die right next to me, it made me think about death for the first time in my life.

After my father's death, I had to take on much family responsibility because I was the oldest son. This was especially difficult in my third year of high school when I had to

prepare for the college entrance exam. I only began studying a few months before the exam. However, I could not make up for the three years I had did not take my education seriously, and I failed the college exam. After high school I began my compulsory military service.

After six months of military service, I once again studied for the college entrance exam, and this time I passed. I realized the importance of education, so I studied hard and did well at college in Korea. It is very difficult to graduate from a two-year college and succeed in Korea, so I decided to study in the United States and start over from the first year of college. My goal was to study business in America, become a businessman, and earn a lot of money. For me, this was my American dream.

Before going to America, however, I met a girl and fell in love. Neither she nor I had time during the week so we could only see each other on Sundays. She was attending Manna Methodist Church in Bundang, so I started going to church on Sundays to meet her. Through this woman, who became my wife, God's grace brought me back to church.

In September 1996 my wife and I flew to the United States. After studying English with my wife for one year at Drexel University, I was supposed to enter the business administration department. However, the tuition was very expensive. So, I transferred to Camden County College in New Jersey, and we moved from Philadelphia to New Jersey.

I graduated from Camden County College in June 2001. I received an Optional Practical Training (OPT) permit which allowed us to stay in the U.S. and work for one year. In October, I got a job as a program staff at the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference office. This was God's prevenient grace for calling me to be a pastor. In June

2011, I graduated from Thomas Edison State University with a BA and in September entered United Theological Seminary (United). In May 2015 I graduated with a Master of Divinity degree from United. In September 2021 I began the DMin program at United.

Three Significant Spiritual Events

Three significant spiritual events impacted my life. The three events are my salvation experience, my calling to be a pastor, and my encounter with the Holy Spirit. God worked through each of these events to lead me to where I am now.

The first event, my salvation, took place through my wife's mother. In 1995, my future mother-in-law heard a rumor that I was dating her daughter. One day she called me aside and told me, "You must believe in Jesus to marry my daughter." That did not sound too bad so, to show off to my mother-in-law, I simply said, "Yeah. I know."

A week passed and she called me again. She insisted that I set aside four days in an upcoming week. She would tell me where I was going and take care of all the expenses. At the time I was tutoring three middle school students from two families every week and was sure I would not have the time to go. Still, I responded to her, "Yeah. I see." I thought that I could call my mother-in-law the day before going and say that I was sorry but could not go.

But something very surprising happened. I got a call from the two families that I was tutoring saying they were going on a family vacation during the week of my mother-in-law's plan for me. The two families did not know each other and yet they were both going on a family vacation the same week. I suddenly had time in the week, and I could no longer make excuses for not going.

The place my mother-in-law told me to go was a retreat called “Tres Dias.” Tres Dias is an International Fourth-day Christian Renewal Movement. This retreat is very similar to the Walk to Emmaus retreat sponsored by the United Methodist Church that many United Methodists in the United States are familiar with.

It was the last day of Tres Dias, the evening of Saturday, July 7, 1995. All the attendees were seated in chairs in the large auditorium. The auditorium was dark with candles lit everywhere. All the participants in the chairs were asked to close their eyes. As I sat with my eyes closed, I felt that someone came and stood in front of me. The person got down on his knees in front of me, took the socks off both of my feet, and began to wash them one by one. The hand washing my feet was so soft. He washed my feet very carefully. Suddenly hot tears started flowing from my eyes. I was so confused. I thought, “Why am I crying now? I do not want to cry!” I tried to hold back my tears while saying that. But the more I tried to contain them, the more the hot tears flowed down.

After he washed my feet, he grabbed them tightly with both hands, held them to his chest, and began to pray. It struck me that I really wanted to see who this person was. “Who is this person who washed my dirty feet so carefully? Who is this man?” But strangely, I was so afraid to open my eyes. It felt like this man was almost finished praying. So, I thought that if I waited, I may never see this person again. I mustered up the courage to open my eyes. In a vision right before my eyes, I saw Jesus praying with my feet on his chest. I was so surprised. I was so afraid. I immediately closed my eyes again.

I would not know what Jesus looked like, but I just knew it was Jesus. That night, Jesus met me. I did not go there to meet Jesus. Jesus Himself came to see me. I do not know how many times I cried that night. How in the world could that be? Jesus, who is God, said that He loves me. I was not the first to love, Jesus loved me first. I remember the passionate love of Jesus that struck my heart that night. I remember that night when my heart felt like it was going to explode. If I had not shed tears, it felt like my heart would have burned up leaving nothing but ashes.

I cried all night that night, and then I just collapsed and slept. I could not help but cry. There was nothing I could do but cry. Jesus died for me, even me. It means that Jesus shed His blood and died on the cross to save me. The reason Jesus did this was that he loved me. That night, I did not know what to do with this love of Jesus. That night I was saved and reborn. And my life has changed completely.

The second significant spiritual event occurred to me one day in 2002. It was God calling me to be a pastor. That day, I was reading Acts 1 and meditating on it. The words of Acts 1:8 continued ringing in my ears: “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” For three days, the words of Acts 1:8 resounded in my ears. I had no idea what this meant.

A few days later while at work at the Conference office, my boss, who was clergy, suddenly to me. “Leo, are you interested in going into ministry?” The moment I heard those words, I realized the meaning for me of Acts 1:8, which had been ringing in my ears for three days. The Lord was calling me to be a pastor.

I rejected the Lord's call. I said to the Lord: “Lord, I will become a businessman and earn a lot of money so that I can become a lay person who supports pastors”. The reason I came to America was to study business and become an entrepreneur to make a lot of money. That was my American dream. I did not want to give up on that dream. So, I ran away from the Lord's call. I was the modern-day Jonah.

As I ran away from the Lord's call, I attempted opening businesses twice. My first business was selling computers and cell phones. I opened a shop in Philadelphia Center City with like-minded friends. We assembled computers and sold cell phones. At first, the business went well, but then in about a year it collapsed. The second business I started was an Education Consulting Business with an acquaintance. It was to recruit middle school students and high school students from Korea and get them admitted to private middle schools and high schools in the United States. We provided students with room and board, after school tutoring, and even counseling for college entrance exams. Since it was the beginning of the business, there was a lot of money being spent, but very little being earned. This went on like this for two years.

In November 2005, three years after my first calling, the Lord called me again to be a pastor. When I went into the Conference office one morning, someone came up to me and asked, “Leo, are you in ministry yet?” He went on to say, “Leo, I can see a pastor’s heart in you.” I was afraid to go to the Conference office the rest of the month because I knew what I was going to hear when I went to work. I was being reminded of the Lord calling me to be a pastor three years ago.

Then I realized something. For the past three years, the Lord had never scolded me, even though I have rejected the Lord's call and ran away. Instead, the Lord respected

my opinion and waited patiently for me. It was then that I realized that the Lord was a good God. In response to God's goodness, I raised my hands and answered the call, "Yes, Lord, here I am." On December 27, 2005, I wrote a letter to the District Superintendent saying that I wanted to become a pastor.

The third significant event occurred around eight years later when I received the powerful baptism of the Holy Spirit. In November 2013, the Lord touched my heart strongly with the words of the "Parable of the Ten Virgins" in Matthew 25. In particular, the words of 25:9 came strongly to my heart: "Go to those who sell oil and buy some for yourselves." I did not know what it meant to buy oil. Every morning I asked the Lord, but there was no answer. One thing I knew was that I had to go to someone and buy some oil. But I did not know where to go, who to go to, or how to buy oil.

A month passed like that. One day in December, through YouTube, I learned that the Catch the Fire Church in Toronto, Canada, was holding the Revival Alliance Conference on January 20 to commemorate the twentieth anniversary of the revival, which started with the powerful presence of the Holy Spirit on January 20, 1994. This revival, also called Toronto Blessing, had been continuously going on for twenty years. I realized that the revival of that church was where I was to buy the oil of the Holy Spirit.

The revival anniversary began on the evening of January 20 at the Catch the Fire Church. During the morning meeting on Wednesday, January 22, an advertisement appeared that Rev. John Arnott, the senior pastor of Catch the Fire Church, and his wife, Carol Arnott, were signing a book at the bookstore during lunchtime. I knew this was a divine appointment prepared by the Lord, and I knew that it was from Rev. John Arnott that I should buy the oil of the Holy Spirit.

My wife and children went to lunch, and I ran to the bookstore to line up for the book signing. Finally, my turn came. When I stood in front of Rev. John Arnott and handed him his book, *The Invitation*, I told him, “My name is Leo Park. I am the Senior Pastor of a small Korean Church. I drove ten hours straight from New Jersey with my wife and three children. I came to buy oil. Would you sell it to me?” Rev. John Arnott listened to me and spoke to his wife, Carol Arnott, who was sitting next to him. “Carol, this young man came to buy oil!” The Rev. John Arnott and Carol Arnott stretched their hands toward me and exclaimed at the same time, “Fire on you!”

At that moment, something like a strong wind hit me. And I flew back about fifty centimeters and fell to the floor. The heavy glory of God came upon me. I was lying on the floor, unable to move a single finger. I heard the voice of the Lord in my heart say, “I am putting just one finger on you, and you can do nothing. Are you willing to be foolish for My glory?” I answered. “Yes, Lord. I am willing.” Under the weight of God's glory, I could not move from the floor for five hours. That day I bought the oil of the Holy Spirit.

Churches I Served

After graduating from Local Pastor’s Licensing School in June 2007, I received my first appointment in July and started my first pastoral ministry. My first pastoral site was the Siloam Korean United Methodist Church in Hamilton Square, New Jersey. There were less than ten members, and I served the church one-quarter-time while also working full-time at the conference office. It was my first pastoral ministry, so I really did my best to serve. I served the church until March 2009.

In January 2010, I received my second appointment as a part-time Interim Pastor to Old Orchards United Methodist Church in Cherry Hill. Old Orchards Church was a white church, with less than ten members. This was my first cross-cultural and cross-racial ministry, so I did my best to serve. As I later found out, the reason they sent me as an Interim Pastor was to close the church. The fact that I was sent to close the church was a huge shock to me. Being sent to close a church was really painful and felt like living day by day waiting for death without any other hope. It was like passing through the wilderness or passing through the darkness of death. Old Orchards Church was founded in 1965 with 112 members that eventually grew to a peak of 426 members in 1975, making it a very strong church. However, due to conflicts between the pastor and church members, church members began to leave, and the church started a continual decline.

Old Orchards Church rented space to Cherry Hill Korean United Methodist Church to help ease the church's financial burden. Cherry Hill Korean Church grew over the years while Old Orchards Church declined. Eventually, Cherry Hill Korean Church outnumbered Old Orchards Church. Finally, Cherry Hill Korean Church bought the building from Old Orchards Church and Old Orchards Church closed in November 2010.

For the ten months from January to November, my pastoral life at Old Orchards Church was very painful. It was not my intention but someone else's decision to cut the last lifeline of the church. No matter how hard I tried, I had no decision-making power and no ability to save the church. After closing Old Orchards Church, I made this confession to the Lord: "Lord, I will never be a pastor who closes churches again."

In June 2011, I was sent to my third church. It was the Korean Union United Methodist Church located in Rahway, New Jersey. The church was later renamed Elim

United Methodist Church. Elim Church was also a small church with about ten members. This church had been quite strong for a Korean immigrant church with nearly 200 adults at one time. However, starting in 2002, conflicts between the pastor and the members of the church caused a gradual decline.

I did not want to repeat the pain I experienced at Old Orchards Church again. Like my confession to the Lord, I did not want to become a pastor who closes a church again. I worked hard, and, as a result, the church grew little by little. The number of members grew to forty members and the church began to become financially stable. The church was brought to life again and hope was created. Even the members of the church thought this was their last chance and did their best to serve the church. I had a very happy time at Elim Church, although the number of members was small.

On a Sunday afternoon in March 2015, I received a phone call from the District Superintendent. I was to be appointed as an associate pastor to Bethany United Methodist Church. I served as an associate pastor at Bethany Church for two years, until I was appointed to the Korean United Methodist Church of South Jersey (KUMC-SJ) in Egg Harbor City. In July 2017, I started as the senior pastor of KUMC-SJ. When I arrived, there were around thirty church members left. At one time it was a strong church with over 150 adults, but due to conflict between the previous pastor and the members, a lot of members left, and membership gradually decreased.

The average age of members of KUMC-SJ was 65. In July 2017, when I first arrived, the total number of adult members was 34. In the late 1980s, KUMC-SJ was the largest Korean immigrant church in Southern New Jersey, with up to 150 adults attending, but it had become a small church with an average of 35 adults attending

Sunday services. Although membership had grown, attendance at the Sunday services had remained relatively the same. In November 2021, the total number of adult members was 55. I worked hard over those four years, which helped the church grow and become financially stable.

The Global Methodist Church, a new traditionalist denomination, was created on May 1, 2022. Traditionalist UMC churches were able to leave the UMC with congregational property under Book of Discipline Paragraph 2553, passed at the 2019 UMC Special General Conference. Paragraph 2553 of Book of Discipline would expire on December 31, 2023. Many traditionalist churches began to leave the denomination. KUMC-SJ also voted on whether to leave the UMC at its second special church conference on October 22, 2022, and the vote was that KUMC-SJ would remain in the UMC. However, I chose to leave the UMC based on my conscience of faith. Effective April 1, 2023, I resigned KUMC-SJ and joined the Global Methodist Church.

When I left KUMC-SJ, I lost the ministry context for my DMin project, so I started looking for a Korean immigrant church with a similar history and circumstances to KUMC-SJ. I was so grateful to connect with the Korean Evangelical Church of Minnesota, which became the ministry context for my DMin project.

Conclusion

I have a fear. The fear is that I might close the door of the church again with my own hands. This fear is also the fear of failure of my ministry. I have a strong obsession that I do not want the church I minister to shut down, at least not while I am the pastor.

This pain comes from my experience of closing the door of the church in the early days of my ministry.

It was not really my fault that Old Orchard United Methodist Church had to be closed. It was because of external influences that had nothing to do with me. However, as a pastor, it was a great shock and pain for me, who had no choice but to watch the death of the church from the sidelines. I also felt my own fear of incompetence and inadequacy that there was nothing I could do to save the dying church. I strive to do the best I can because I do not want to experience that pain again.

My strength is intercession. Intercessory prayer became the most important part of my religious life. In 2009 I served on the intercession committee of the Jersey Shore Will Graham Celebration, partnering with the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association. We met weekly for nearly two years leading up to the event in May 2011. Every week for these two years, local intercessors and pastors gathered to pray for an evangelism revival in the Jersey Shore area. The Jersey Shore Will Graham Celebration was successfully held in May 2011 at the Great Auditorium in Ocean Grove. This experience taught me the power of intercessory prayer for evangelistic revival.

In October 2019, I began leading the Wesleyan Covenant Association International Intercessory Prayer Network. Intercessory prayer teams were established in 42 chapters out of 50 regional chapters in the United States and in six countries around the world: Zimbabwe, Kenya-Ethiopia, Uganda, Liberia, Philippines, and Bulgaria-Romania. Around 800 intercessors worldwide interceded weekly or monthly for leaders and ministries of the Wesleyan Covenant Association, an organization working to support the traditionalist movement that would eventually become the GMC. On the evening of

the third Monday of every month, more than thirty Lead Intercessors gathered to pray.

These prayers were for a revival in the Methodist Church, especially as the Church seemed heading for a division. This group then laid the prayer foundation for the GMC when division became inevitable. My strength of intercession prayer was used by God.

Coupling my calling to intercessory prayer with the need for KEMC-MN to become a spiritually healthy church, my DMin project will focus on developing this aspect of life in the congregation. Intercessory prayer on a global level helps members look away from the local difficulties of a struggling church towards the spiritual impact they can have in the Kingdom of God. If the members of KEMC-MN participate in an intercessory prayer training and participate in an intercessory prayer ministry, then they will increase in their understanding of the role of the church that plays in the global faith community and will increase the understanding of the value of the church in their everyday lives. In this process, the church members will walk away with a greater appreciation for and a new attitude about the church and why it is necessary for the church to continue to exist and to be a force for the Kingdom of God.

CHAPTER TWO

BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS

Introduction

The goal of this DMin project is for the Korean Evangelical Methodist Church of Minnesota to transform their faith through intercessory prayer training by turning their eyes away from focusing on local difficulties and focusing on the role the church plays in the global church. In Mark 11:15-17, Jesus says, “My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations.” This passage will be examined as an example of how to turn away from local issues to a more global approach, especially in our prayer life.

Mark 11:15-17 is commonly known as “Cleaning of the Temple.” This passage describes Jesus' dramatic act of cleaning the temple of the money changers and animal vendors. Parallel passages are also found in Matthew 21:12-17, Luke 19:45-48, and John 2:13-22. The reason I specifically chose Mark 11:15-17 is the phrase Jesus uses in this Gospel: “all the nations.” In Matthew 21:13 Jesus said, “My house shall be called a house of prayer;” in Luke 19:46 Jesus said, “My house shall be a house of prayer;” and in John 2:16 Jesus says, “Stop making my Father’s house a marketplace!” But in Mark 11:17, Jesus said, “My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations.”

This chapter examines the historical background of the Gospel of Mark, the cultural background of Mark 11:15-17, and the biblical context of Mark 11:15-17. Following these is a detailed exegetical analysis of the primary passage. The exegesis

will examine some of the Greek words, with a special focus on the words “my house,” and include some biblical Hebrew background to the New Testament text.

This deep research and examination will show how Jesus, the head of the church, is talking about what the church is and what the church is supposed to do. Also, Jesus linked the Old and New Testaments together by directly quoting the words of Isaiah. By linking the Old and New Testaments, Jesus is saying that God's intended definition and role of the God's people (including the New Testament church) has not changed.

Biblical, Cultural and Contextual Backgrounds of Mark 11:15-17

Biblical Background

Many theologians acknowledge that the Gospel of Mark is the first of the four Gospels to be written. For this reason, theologians believe that the content of the other two Synoptic Gospels, Matthew and Luke, was written based on the Gospel of Mark. The general consensus is that Mark wrote the Gospel around 70 C.E.¹

The author of the Gospel of Mark is traditionally thought to be John Mark. The first mention of his name is in Acts 12:12. “As soon as he realized this, he went to the house of Mary, the mother of John whose other name was Mark, where many had gathered and were praying.” Although there is some debate, for the purposes of this chapter, John Mark, hereafter referred to simply as “Mark,” will be considered the author.

¹ Pheme Perkins, “The Gospel of Mark,” *The New Interpreter's Bible Commentary: Volume VIII, New Testament Articles Matthew-Mark* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1994), 517.

Theologians also agree that Mark was a close associate of the Apostle Peter, and that when the Apostle Peter was in Rome at the end of his life, Mark was also in Rome with him. It was in Rome that Mark most likely wrote his Gospel. William Lane, former professor of Biblical Studies, also claims that Mark wrote the Gospel of Mark after Peter was martyred in Rome.² At this time Rome was ruled by Nero.³

In 2 Timothy 4:11, Peter asks Timothy to bring Mark to Rome. “Only Luke is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful in my ministry.” In 1 Peter 5:13, Peter says that Mark sends his greetings to the church in Rome. “Your sister church in Babylon, chosen together with you, sends you greetings; so does my son Mark.” The Babylon that Peter is talking about here means Rome. Early Church Father Eusebius explained that “Mark, who became Peter’s interpreter, accurately wrote, though not in order, as many of the things said and done by the Lord as he had remembered.”⁴

What makes Mark's Gospel different from other Synoptic Gospels and John's Gospel is that Mark wrote the Gospel for Gentile Christians, especially Gentile Christians living in Rome.⁵ Evidence for this is that Mark describes Jewish customs (e.g., 7:2-4, 14:12, 15:42)⁶ and regularly interprets Aramaic words or phrases (e.g., 3:17; 5:41; 7:11, 34; 10:46; 14:36; 15:22, 34).⁷ As Lane writes, further evidence of the Gentile emphasis is

² William L. Lane, “The Gospel of Mark,” *New International Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1974), 17.

³ Lane, “The Gospel of Mark,” 25.

⁴ Perkins, “The Gospel of Mark,” 517.

⁵ Lane, “The Gospel of Mark,” 25.

⁶ Lane, “The Gospel of Mark,” 25.

⁷ Lane, “The Gospel of Mark,” 25.

that “It is noteworthy that the Gospel of Mark reaches its climax in the confession of Jesus’ deity by a Roman Centurion (15:39).”⁸ The Gentile audience would make “all nations” an important point for Mark.

Cultural Background

There are seven festivals, called the festivals of the Lord, ordained by God. Leviticus 23:2 says, “These are the appointed festivals of the LORD that you shall proclaim as holy convocations, my appointed festivals.” Leviticus 23 lists these seven festivals in order: the Passover, the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the Feast of First Fruits, Pentecost (the Feast of Weeks), the Feast of Trumpets, the Day of Atonement, and the Feast of Booths (the Feast of Tabernacles). The Passover, the Feast of Unleavened Bread, and the Feast of First Fruits are the spring feasts, and the Feast of Trumpets, the Day of Atonement, and the Feast of Booths (the Feast of Tabernacles) are the autumn feasts. Between the feasts of spring and autumn there is Pentecost (the Feast of Weeks).

Of these seven feasts, three require Israelite men to come to the temple in Jerusalem to perform sacrifices. These three feasts are the Feast of Unleavened Bread, Pentecost (the Feast of Weeks), and the Feast of Booths (the Feast of Tabernacles). All Jewish men living in Israel were required to make a pilgrimage to the Jerusalem Temple three times a year to celebrate those three festivals.⁹ God said in Deuteronomy 16:16: “Three times a year all your males shall appear before the LORD your God at the place

⁸ Lane, “The Gospel of Mark,” 25.

⁹ First Fruits of Zion, *HaYesod: The Festivals: Student Workbook* (Marshfield, MO: First Fruits of Zion Inc., 2021), 2.4.

that he will choose: at the festival of unleavened bread, at the festival of weeks, and at the festival of booths. They shall not appear before that LORD empty-handed.”

The Feast of Unleavened Bread was celebrated for seven days starting the day after the Passover. The Feast of Unleavened Bread effectively included the Passover. Passover is a very important day for the Israelites. The first day of Passover celebrates God freeing the Israelites from slavery in Egypt. God performed great miracles for the people of Israel. The Israelites remember the great miracles God performed for them on the first Passover day and tell their children the story of salvation that God delivered them from Egypt. It is the story of God’s redemption in bringing the nation of Israel out from the bondage into freedom. The Passover also had a prophetic meaning for the Israelites of the coming Messiah. The Israelites were waiting for the Messiah to come as a descendant of David. They believed that the Messiah would come and deliver them from Roman bondage.

This is the cultural background of Mark 11. Jewish men from all over Israel made pilgrimages to the Jerusalem Temple at the Festival of Unleavened Bread. Jesus was also a Jewish man who, obeying God's command, came to the temple in Jerusalem to celebrate the Festival of Unleavened Bread. John 2:13 says this: “The Passover of Jews was near, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.” Unlike modern banquets, these festivals were based on the sacrificial altar and the worship of God.¹⁰

God commanded the Israelites not to come empty-handed when they came to the Temple of Jerusalem three times a year to keep the three festivals. In particular, on the Passover, a one-year-old lamb without blemish must be offered as a sacrifice. However,

¹⁰ Mitch and Zhava Glaser, *The Fall Feasts of Israel* (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 1987), 15.

God allowed the poor who could not offer a lamb to offer a dove instead of a lamb.

Leviticus 5:7 says: “But if you cannot afford a sheep, you shall bring to the LORD, as your penalty for the sin that you have committed, two turtledoves or two pigeons, one for a sin offering and the other for a burnt offering.” At the time of Jesus, people who came from far away could buy animals to be sacrificed to God in the Temple without having to bring the animals long distances. But they had to exchange Roman coins for temple coins to buy the animals. They also had to pay marked up prices for the sheep or doves.

Contextual Background

Mark 11 is the beginning of the final period of Jesus’ ministry on earth. It begins with His triumphal entry into Jerusalem. Jesus as the sacrificial Lamb of God to save all people, both Jews and Gentiles, from their sins, finally enters Jerusalem to die on the cross. The period from the triumphal entry of Jesus to the crucifixion is one week.

Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem begins Jesus' public revealing that he is the waited for Messiah of the people of Israel. Jesus rides on a donkey as enters the city of Jerusalem. This is the fulfillment of the Messianic prophecy foretold in Zechariah 9:9, “Rejoice greatly, O daughter Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter Jerusalem! Lo, your king comes to you; triumphant and victorious is he, humble and riding on a donkey.”

Many people gathered in Jerusalem to greet Jesus as he entered the city of Jerusalem in fulfillment of the prophecy of Zechariah 9:9, shouting Psalm 118:26 and Psalm 148:1 with joy. Psalm 118:26 says: “Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the LORD. We bless you from the house of the LORD.” Psalm 148:1 says: “Praise the LORD! Praise the LORD from the heavens; praise him in the heights!” Some spread their

cloaks as Jesus passed, while others cut down palm branches and spread them out on the road. Many people greet Jesus with Psalm hymns, holding palm branches in their hands and waving them. Today we celebrate this day as Palm Sunday. Jesus died on the cross later that week.

The morning after this triumphal entry, Jesus entered the Temple in Jerusalem and drove out those who bought and sold in the Temple. He overturned the tables of the money changers and the chairs of those who sold doves. As He does so, Jesus cries out, “My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nation? But you have made it a den of robbers” (Mark 11:17).

Detailed Exegetical Analysis of Mark 11:15-17

Comparison of the “Cleansing of the Temple” Stories

For a complete and detailed understanding, the text of Mark 11:15-17 will be compared to that of Matthew 21, Luke 19, and John 2, which record the same event. This is because the things not found in Mark 11 are recorded in the Gospels of Matthew, Luke, and John. That this event is recorded in all four Gospels shows its significance. Tables one to three contain the text from different sections of the “Cleansing of the Temple” story: the prelude to the story, the story itself, and the events following the story. As shown, not all of the Gospels have all three sections. The focus of the discussion is on comparing the accounts in Matthew, Luke, and John to the account in Mark.

In the prelude to the Temple story (see table 1), only the Luke account includes text not found in Mark 11. Luke 19 records that before Jesus entered Jerusalem, He wept

while looking at the temple from afar. The first reason Jesus was sad enough to weep was that the temple was supposed to be a house of prayer, but it has become a place of business. The second reason is that Jesus already knew that the temple in Jerusalem would be destroyed completely that not a single stone would be left on it in 40 years.

Table 1. Gospel Comparisons of the Prelude to the “Cleansing of the Temple” Story

Mark 11: 12-20	Matthew 21:12-19	Luke 19:41-48	John 2:13-17
¹² On the following day, when they came from Bethany, he was hungry. ¹³ Seeing in the distance a fig tree in leaf, he went to see whether perhaps he would find anything on it. When he came to it, he found nothing but leaves, for it was not the season for figs. ¹⁴ He said to it, “May no one ever eat fruit from you again.” And his disciples heard it	[None]	⁴¹ As he came near and saw the city, he wept over it, ⁴² saying, “If you, even you, had only recognized on this day the things that make for peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. ⁴³ Indeed, the days will come upon you, when your enemies will set up ramparts around you and surround you, and hem you in on every side. ⁴⁴ They will crush you to the ground, you and your children within you, and they will not leave within you one stone upon another; because you did not recognize the time of your visitation from God.”	[None]

Regarding the cleansing event (see table 2), John 2 records how Jesus made a whip out of cords and drove sheep and cattle out of the temple when he was cleaning the temple in Jerusalem. The Mark account does not include sheep and cattle or the use of the whip of cords. The Mark account, in comparison to the other Gospels, includes the phrase

“and he would not allow anyone to carry anything through the temple” as well as the important additional phrase “for all nations.” All the accounts refer to “my house” (“my Father’s house” in John), though the three synoptics mention this in with regard to prayer while in John mentions this in regard to not making it a marketplace. In all cases, the house of God was not being used for the right purpose.

Table 2. Gospel Comparisons of the “Cleansing of the Temple” Story

Mark 11: 12-20	Matthew 21:12-19	Luke 19:41-48	John 2:13-17
<p>¹⁵ Then they came to Jerusalem. And he entered the temple and began to drive out those who were selling and those who were buying in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves; ¹⁶ and he would not allow anyone to carry anything through the temple. ¹⁷ He was teaching and saying, “Is it not written, ‘My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations’? But you have made it a den of robbers.”</p>	<p>¹² Then Jesus entered the temple and drove out all who were selling and buying in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves. ¹³ He said to them, “It is written, ‘My house shall be called a house of prayer’; but you are making it a den of robbers.”</p>	<p>⁴⁵ Then he entered the temple and began to drive out those who were selling things there; ⁴⁶ and he said, “It is written, ‘My house shall be a house of prayer’; but you have made it a den of robbers.”</p>	<p>¹³ The Passover of the Jews was near, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. ¹⁴ In the temple he found people selling cattle, sheep, and doves, and the money changers seated at their tables. ¹⁵ Making a whip of cords, he drove all of them out of the temple, both the sheep and the cattle. He also poured out the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables. ¹⁶ He told those who were selling the doves, “Take these things out of here! Stop making my Father’s house a marketplace!” ¹⁷ His disciples remembered that it was written, “Zeal for your house will consume me.”</p>

Following the cleansing event, and not included in the Mark account, are two items (see table 3). In Matthew, the blind and the lame were healed after Jesus cleansed the temple in Jerusalem. Matthew also describes that Jesus withered the fig tree after finding no fruit. In Mark, Jesus tells the fig tree, “May not one every eat fruit from you again,” prior to the entrance into the Temple.

Table 3. Gospel Comparisons of Events Following the “Cleansing of the Temple” Story

Mark 11: 12-20	Matthew 21:12-19	Luke 19:41-48	John 2:13-17
¹⁸ And when the chief priests and the scribes heard it, they kept looking for a way to kill him; for they were afraid of him, because the whole crowd was spellbound by his teaching. ¹⁹ And when evening came, Jesus and his disciples went out of the city.	¹⁴ The blind and the lame came to him in the temple, and he cured them. ¹⁵ But when the chief priests and the scribes saw the amazing things that he did, and heard the children crying out in the temple, “Hosanna to the Son of David,” they became angry ¹⁶ and said to him, “Do you hear what these are saying?” Jesus said to them, “Yes; have you never read, ‘Out of the mouths of infants and nursing babies you have prepared praise for yourself?’” ¹⁷ He left them, went out of the city to Bethany, and spent the night there.	⁴⁷ Every day he was teaching in the temple. The chief priests, the scribes, and the leaders of the people kept looking for a way to kill him; ⁴⁸ but they did not find anything they could do, for all the people were spellbound by what they heard.	[None]

²⁰ In the morning as they passed by, they saw the fig tree withered away to its roots.	¹⁸ In the morning, when he returned to the city, he was hungry. ¹⁹ And seeing a fig tree by the side of the road, he went to it and found nothing at all on it but leaves. Then he said to it, “May no fruit ever come from you again!” And the fig tree withered at once.	[None]	[None]
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Following the incident in the temple, Matthew 21 includes something not found in Mark 11. In Matthew 21:14 it says: “The blind and the lame came to him in the temple, and he cured them.” Immediately after Jesus cleansed the temple, He healed the blind and the lame. As Jesus entered the temple, he saw many in need of prayer and God's touch. But he saw that the business was being carried out in a place that then excluded them, especially the Gentiles, from being prayed for and praying to God.

Word Analysis

In Mark 11:17, Jesus says: “My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations.” The word “house” here is οἶκος (oikos) in the original Greek.¹¹ It means “an inhabited house, any dwelling place, home, or a household.” In Hebrew, the associated word is בַּיִת (bayith) which means “house, dwelling habitation, home, household, or family.”¹² A similar associated Hebrew word is מִשְׁכָּן (mishkân), which is often translated “tabernacle.” “Tabernacle” literally means “dwelling place” but also refers to portable

¹¹ “Interlinear Bible Search, Passage Lookup: Mark 11:1,” StudyLight.org, accessed March 24, 2022, <https://www.studylight.org/study-desk/interlinear.html?q1=Mark+11:1>

¹² “Interlinear Bible Search, Passage Lookup: Isaiah 56:7,” StudyLight.org, accessed March 24, 2022, <https://www.studylight.org/study-desk/interlinear.html?q1=Isaiah+56:7>

precursor to the Temple built by the Israelites in the wilderness, where God's presence would dwell among the people.¹³ The word "my" refers to God. In other words, "my house" literally means "a dwelling place of God" on earth. The phrase "a dwelling place of God on earth" appears in the Bible in seven forms from Genesis to Revelation.

The first form of "a dwelling place of God on earth" is the Garden of Eden. In Genesis 2, God created the Garden of Eden on this earth, created the first humans, Adam and Eve, and made them live in the Garden of Eden. God also lived with Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. Genesis 3:8 says: "They heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden at the time of the evening breeze, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden."

The second form of "a dwelling place of God on earth" is the tabernacle of Moses. In Exodus 25, God told Moses to build a tabernacle for God to dwell at the foot of Mount Sinai. Exodus 25:8-9 God says: "And have them make me a sanctuary, so that I may dwell among them. In accordance with all that I show you concerning the pattern of the tabernacle and of all its furniture, so you shall make it." After completion, the twelve tribes surrounded the tabernacle at the foot of Mount Sinai. A "Divine cloud of glory" that was at the top of Mount Sinai "left the mountain's summit in order to rest upon the Tabernacle below."¹⁴ Exodus 40:34 says: "Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle." And in Exodus 40:38 it says: "For the cloud of the Lord was on the tabernacle by day, and fire was in the cloud by night, before

¹³ "Interlinear Bible Search, Passage Lookup: Exodus 25:9," StudyLight.org, accessed March 24, 2022, <https://www.studylight.org/study-desk/interlinear.html?q1=Exodus+25:9>

¹⁴ Israel Ariel and Chaim Richman, *Carta's Illustrated Encyclopedia of The Holy Temple in Jerusalem* (Jerusalem, Israel: The Temple Institute and Carta, 2005), 9.

the eyes of all the house of Israel at each stage of their journey.” After the Israelites entered the land of Canaan, the Moses’ Tabernacle was in Shiloh.

The third form of “a dwelling place of God on earth” is the tent of David. In 2 Samuel 6, King David brought the ark of God from Abbinadab's house and placed the ark of God in the tent he had made. 2 Samuel 6:17 reads: “They brought in the ark of the Lord, and set it in its place, inside the tent that David had pitched for it; and David offered burnt offerings and offerings of well-being before the Lord.” The ark of God symbolizes the Presence of God.

A fourth form of “a dwelling place of God on earth” is Solomon's temple. In 1 Kings 6, King Solomon builds the temple for God. God says to King Solomon: “Concerning this house that you are building, if you will walk in my statutes, obey my ordinances, and keep all my commands by walking in them, then I will establish my promise with you, which I made to your father David. I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will not forsake my people Israel” (1 Kgs. 6:12-13). The telling of this in Chronicles adds: “so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud; for the glory of the Lord filled the house of God” (2 Chron. 5:14).

Solomon's temple is destroyed by Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar. After seventy years, the Israelites return from Babylon and rebuild the destroyed temple in Jerusalem. Ezra 3:8 says: “In the second year after their arrival at the house of God at Jerusalem, in the second month, Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel and Jeshua son of Jozadak made a beginning, together with the rest of their people, the priests and the Levites and all who had come to Jerusalem from the captivity. They appointed the Levites, from twenty years old and upward, to have the oversight of the work on the house of the

Lord.” This is called the Second Temple. And later this Second Temple was built bigger and more magnificent by King Herod. This temple, built by King Herod, is the temple in the time of Jesus.

The fifth form of “a dwelling place of God on earth” is Jesus Himself. John 2:19-21 says: “Jesus answered them, ‘Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.’ The Jews then said, ‘This temple has been under construction for forty-six years, and will you raise it up in three days?’ But he was speaking of the temple of his body.” John 1:14 says of Jesus: “And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father’s only son, full of grace and truth.”

The sixth form of “a dwelling place of God on earth” is the Church. The Church is not a building, but a gathering of believers, the community of believers. After Jesus resurrected and ascended into heaven, the Holy Spirit promised in Acts 2 is poured out on 120 believers gathered in an upper room in Jerusalem. This is the beginning of the Church. Acts 2:1-2 says this: “When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting.” 1 Corinthians 3:16 says: “Do you not know that you are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit dwells in you?” The “you” here refers to the Corinthian Church, not an individual.

The seventh form of “a dwelling place of God on earth” is the New Jerusalem. When Jesus returns, the real temple in heaven will come down to this earth. In Revelation 21:2-3 it says: “And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from

the throne saying, ‘See, the home of God is among mortals. He will dwell with them; they will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them.’

Exegesis of Mark 11:15-17

In verse 15 Jesus “entered the temple.” The “temple” here refers to the “Court of the Gentiles.” At the time of Jesus, the temple in Jerusalem was divided into three courts—the Court of Gentiles, the Court of Women, and the Court of Jews. The Court of Gentiles is a space reserved for non-Jewish Gentiles to worship God. The Court of Women is a space reserved for Jewish women to worship God. And the Court of Jews is a space reserved for Jewish men to worship God.

The events of Mark 11:15-17, where Jesus drove out those who bought and sold and overturned the tables of the money changers and the chairs of those who sold doves, had to take place in the Court of the Gentiles. In The Court of Women and the Court of Jews no such trades took place. Jewish women and Jewish men were worshipping God in the space reserved for them. But in the Court of Gentiles, the Gentiles were not worshipping God, but there was business instead. The place prepared for Gentiles to worship God became a business place for Jews. In other words, the space for the Gentiles in the Jerusalem Temple disappeared. As Jews conducted their business of exchanging money and purchasing animals for the sacrifices, there was no place for Gentiles to participate in worship. Lane in *New International Commentary on the New Testament* says that “the use of the forecourt as an open market effectually prevented the one area of the Temple which was available to the Gentiles from being a place of prayer.”¹⁵

¹⁵ Lane, “The Gospel of Mark,” 238.

In 11:15, Jesus entered the Court of Gentiles and became very angry. Jesus, who is generally portrayed as kind and generous, is so angry that he drives out all who sell in the Court of Gentiles, overturning the tables of the money changers and the chairs of those selling doves. Perkins reminds us that people who came to worship in the temple at this time “had to exchange Roman coins for coins minted at Tyre in order to place an offering in the Temple treasury” because the Roman coins “bore the image of pagan deities—often combined with that of the emperor—which were “in violation of the commandment against making graven images (Exodus 20:4).”¹⁶ And vendors provided sacrificial animals for pilgrims “who traveled long distances to worship God in the Jerusalem Temple, and doves were the traditional sacrificial offering of the poor people.”¹⁷

But why was Jesus so angry? Jesus was not angry when people tried to kill Him. Jesus did not get angry when people spit in His face, cursed, and hit Him. Why was Jesus so angry? Lane suggests that “Jesus expelled the merchants from the Court of the Gentiles in order to safeguard rights and privileges sanctioned by God.”¹⁸ But is this reason enough for His anger?

It appears that 15:17 explains why Jesus was angry. “Is it not written, ‘My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations’? But you have made it a den of robbers.” These words were quoted by Jesus from Isaiah 56:7. Isaiah 56:7 reads: “these I will bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer; their burnt

¹⁶ Perkins, “The Gospel of Mark,” 673.

¹⁷ Perkins, “The Gospel of Mark,” 673.

¹⁸ Lane, “The Gospel of Mark,” 238.

offerings and their sacrifices will be acceptable on my altar; for my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples.”

The reason Jesus was angry is that the temple that was supposed to be “a house of prayer for all the nations” has become “a den of robbers.” Matthew Coomber, Margaret Aymer and Hugh Page in the *Fortress Commentary on the Bible* explains that “the temple is not functioning as intended. Instead of being a ‘house of prayer for all nations’ (Isa. 56:7), it has become ‘a den of robbers’ (Jer. 7:11).”¹⁹ Perkins in *The New Interpreter’s Bible Commentary* explains that by the act of Jesus, “the ultimate failure of the Temple is depicted symbolically.”²⁰

Before Jesus cleaned the temple, he cursed a fig tree that had no fruit and had only leaves. And after Jesus cleaned the temple, the fig tree that Jesus had cursed was uprooted and dried up. Perkins explains that “by framing the episode in the Temple with the cursing of the fig tree, Mark suggests that the Temple will suffer a similar fate—it no longer fulfills the purpose for which God intended it.”²¹

Perkins says that Mark, in this episode, emphasizes that “God’s house of prayer for all nations has been corrupted by mercenary concerns.”²² Perkins says that “Christians often face a similar dilemma without realizing it. With buildings and programs to support, they may fall into the trap of marketing religion.”²³ He also says that “Christians

¹⁹ Matthew J. M Coomber, Margaret Aymer, and Hugh Page, *Fortress Commentary on the Bible: Two Volume Set* (Lanham, VA: Fortress Press, 2014), 201.

²⁰ Perkins, “The Gospel of Mark,” 673.

²¹ Perkins, “The Gospel of Mark,” 673.

²² Perkins, “The Gospel of Mark,” 674.

²³ Perkins, “The Gospel of Mark,” 674.

may find it difficult to avoid the marketing orientations of a successful church. How fast is it growing? How many people attend service regularly? What's the average weekly collection?"²⁴ He further says that "however, here, through this episode, Jesus calls us back to the only question that counts: What did God intend? A house of prayer for all peoples."²⁵

Conclusion

In Mark 11:15-17, Jesus shows his anger towards the Temple, and by extension the Church, for not doing what it was supposed to. The people gathered in the temple, but not all the people and not for the right reasons. The Gentiles were pushed out of the Gentile Court because of the market that was there, and the market itself showed that the people were more interested in worldly things than praying for all people in God's house. Through His actions, Jesus rebuked those who were busy with the local requirements of exchanging money and buying sacrifices rather than in prayer, especially for the world.

The Jews were called to make space for the Gentiles in their temple court so that they could encounter God and even receive healing, as in the Matthew account. Likewise, we need to see if there is a space for "Gentiles," that is those who are different than us, in the church today. In particular to my context, we need to check whether the Korean church is a place to pray only for Korean believers and for the country of Korea. The church should not only pray for its own people and country, but also pray for the Gentile (read "other") people and nations.

²⁴ Perkins, "The Gospel of Mark," 674.

²⁵ Perkins, "The Gospel of Mark," 674.

Jesus quoted from Isaiah 56:7. By quoting the words of Isaiah, Jesus linked the Old and New Testaments. By linking the Old and New Testaments, Jesus showed that God's intended definition and role of the church had not changed. The church that God intended through the Bible is "a house of prayer for all nations." The church, the house of God, must become "a house of prayer for all nations" and those who come to the house of prayer must become people of prayer.

Through this DMin Project the members of the Korean Evangelical Methodist Church of Minnesota learn to focus on the role the church plays in the global church rather than focusing on local difficulties. Rather than focusing on the necessities of the church (like the Jews focusing on the necessities of the money and animals in the temple), the church needs to be externally focused as a "house of prayer for all the nations." The members of KEMC-MN need to be freed from the anxiety associated with numerical growth. Intercessory Prayer Ministry helps the church members look away from the local difficulties of a struggling church towards the spiritual impact they can have in the Kingdom of God. The church members can have a correct biblical conception of what God intended the church to look like and the role of the church. In this process the church members will walk away a greater appreciation for and a new attitude about the church and why it is necessary for the church to continue to exist.

CHAPTER THREE

HISTORICAL FOUNDATIONS

Introduction

There have been countless prayer movements large and small in the history of Christianity. One very amazing prayer movement stands out: the Moravians' 100-year Intercessory Prayer Movement. This prayer movement went on continually for one hundred years. Surprisingly, this was not just a general prayer movement, but an intercessory prayer movement towards world missions.

In 1722, Count Nicolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf met the Moravian preacher Christian David. Count Zinzendorf heard from him that the Christians in Moravia were being persecuted and struggling.¹ Count Zinzendorf offered refuge in his land where they could escape from persecution. David brought many Moravian Christians there to form the Moravian Community of Herrnhut.²

On August 13, 1727, the Moravian community of faith experienced an amazing outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Twenty-eight men and twenty-eight women decided to intercede every hour for 24 hours.³ This becomes the Moravian intercession movement

¹ "A Brief History of 24/7 Prayer," International House of Prayer Missions Base of Kansas City, accessed January 30, 2022, <https://www.ihopkc.org/prayerroom/history/>.

² "A Brief History of 24/7 Prayer."

³ "A Brief History of 24/7 Prayer."

that lasted for over one hundred years. Their intercession bears the remarkable fruit of sending around three hundred missionaries to different parts of the world by 1791.⁴

Moravian Christians escaped persecution in Moravia and became asylum seekers in the land provided by Zinzendorf. They formed a community of faith amid many difficulties, but they did not focus on local difficulties but focused instead on the kingdom of God through intercession. As a result, an amazing world mission was accomplished. David Butts, President of Harvest Prayer Ministries, put it this way:

“One of the most exciting and practical [prayer movements] for us today is the account of the Moravians of Herrnhut who experienced a powerful revival in 1727 that continues to impact the world in our day. Many would trace the beginnings of the modern missions’ movement to the revival among the Moravians and their radical obedience in following Christ to the ends of the earth.”⁵

This DMin project is meant to lead a church towards a broader world focused intercessory prayer ministry. The Moravians’ 100-year Intercessory Prayer Movement that was missionally focused provides a strong historical foundation. What was the driving force behind how the Moravians were able to continue their intercession for one hundred years?

Behind the beginning of the Moravians' 100-year Intercessory Prayer Movement was a man named Count Nicolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf. This chapter will explain who Count Zinzendorf is and how he has influenced and played a role in the Moravians’ 100-year Intercessory Prayer Movement. As prelude to this, this chapter will explain why

⁴ “A Prayer Meeting that Lasted 100 Years,” Christian History Institute, accessed January 30, 2022, <https://christianhistoryinstitute.org/magazine/article/one-hundred-year-prayer-meeting>.

⁵ John Greenfield, and Mark S Mirza, *Power from On High: The Two Hundredth Anniversary of the Great Moravian Revival 1727-1927* (Atlanta, GA: CTM Publishing Inc., 2017), Location 126, Kindle.

Moravian Christians had to leave Moravia to form a community in Herrnhut, the land of Count Zinzendorf.

Most important in relation to this DMin project, this chapter will also show how the Herrnhut Moravian community was able to overcome their local difficulties through intercessory prayer. I want the members of the KEMC-MN to learn how the Moravians were able to overcome local difficulties in their small community of faith in Herrnhut through intercessory prayer, and how this Moravian Intercessory Prayer Movement played an important role in the history of the global church. The hope is that the members of KEMC-MN will apply what they learn from the history of the Moravian Intercessory Prayer Movement to help overcome the current local difficulties of their church and realize that they are playing an important role in the history of the world church.

Count Nicolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf

Count Nicolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf was born in Dresden, the main city in Saxony (now part of Germany), on Ascension Day, May 26th, 1700. He resided in his grandmother's castle in the little Saxony village of Gross-Hennersdorf.⁶ Count Zinzendorf was raised by his grandmother when his father died of pneumonia and his mother remarried. His grandmother was a very faithful Lutheran and became a strong religious influence on Count Zinzendorf. Youth With a Mission (YWAM) authors Janet and Geoff Benge emphasize, "The part of Ludwig's education that his grandmother and

⁶ J. E. Hutton, *A History of Moravian Missions* (London: Forgotten Books, 2017), Location 64, Kindle.

aunt cared about most was his spiritual upbringing.”⁷ Count Zinzendorf went to church several times a week with his grandmother and every day sang hymns and read the Bible in her castle. Thus, Count Zinzendorf was brought up in a very religious home environment.

Count Zinzendorf developed a strong interest in the Bible, which led to a particular interest in foreign missions. His interest was first peaked when he was eight or nine years old when he heard about the missions of the East Indies. Zinzendorf recounted at a meeting of the English Moravians at Fetter Lane, London, on August 31, 1753: “I know the day, the hour, the spot in Hennersdorf. It was in the Great Room; the year was 1708 or 1709; I heard items read out of the paper about the East Indies, before regular reports were issued; and there and then the first missionary impulse arose in my soul.”⁸

Count Zinzendorf started at the Halle School in 1710, when he was ten years old. There he spent six years in a missionary atmosphere. One day in 1715 Count Zinzendorf and his friend Count Watterville formed a solemn covenant. Count Zinzendorf described the covenant like this: “We resolved to do all in our power for the conversion of the heathen, especially for those for whom no one else cared, and by means of men whom God, we believed, would provide.”⁹

Count Zinzendorf and Count Watterville formed a threefold resolution. “First, they resolved to further Missions; secondly, they would give their attention to despised and neglected races; and thirdly, if they could not go themselves, they would trust in God

⁷ Janet Benge, and Geoff Benge, *Count Zinzendorf: Firstfruit* (Seattle, WA: YWAM Publishing, 2006), Location 128, Kindle.

⁸ Hutton, *A History of Moravian Missions*, Location 77.

⁹ Hutton, *A History of Moravian Missions*, Location 102-106.

to find recruits.”¹⁰ These resolutions were later fulfilled through Count Zinzendorf's first recruits, Christians who had fled from Moravia.

On September 7, 1722, Count Zinzendorf married his cousin Erdmuth Dorothea. Count Zinzendorf wanted to become a Lutheran minister, but his grandmother wanted him to be a counselor in the court of Augustus the Strong, King of Saxony.¹¹ He followed the wishes of his grandmother. In May 1721, Count Zinzendorf inherited the estate from his father and bought the estate from his grandmother.

In that same year of 1721, Count Zinzendorf met Christian David. David was born in Moravia, a region located about two hundred miles southeast of Saxony.¹² David had accepted Jesus at the age of 27 and visited his hometown of Moravia often to preach. There he met “a number of persecuted Christians who were descended from a group known as the Unitas Fratrum, or the Unity of the Brethren”.¹³ The Unitas Fratrum traced its roots back to the teachings of the reformer Jan Hus, who was burned at the stake as a heretic in Prague in 1415.¹⁴

They suffered persecution from the beginning of their formation. After the Reformation of the 1500's, they were being persecuted even more severely by the Catholic Church. These Moravians were looking for a place where they could settle down and live faithfully without being constrained by the religious authorities. David asked

¹⁰ Hutton, *A History of Moravian Missions*, Location 116.

¹¹ Bengel and Bengel, *Count Zinzendorf: Firstfruit*, Location 435.

¹² Bengel and Bengel, *Count Zinzendorf: Firstfruit*, Location 454.

¹³ Bengel and Bengel, *Count Zinzendorf: Firstfruit*, Location 454.

¹⁴ Bengel and Bengel, *Count Zinzendorf: Firstfruit*, Location 454.

Count Zinzendorf to accept them and allow them to settle and live on his land.¹⁵ In 1722, the persecuted Moravian Christians moved to Herrnhut, the land of Count Zinzendorf.

Moravian Christians were very strict in their faith and took the ethical aspect of Christianity very seriously. However, they also had a Pietist heritage that was more evangelical in nature. Thus, these Christians were prone to living out their faith and sharing their faith with others. Persecution by the Catholic church, however, caused them to become more inwardly focused.

Zinzendorf realized that these Moravian Christians needed some guidance. He instituted a four-year program, from 1727 to 1731, where he trained them in four methods: obedience through a “Brotherly Agreement,” Christian charity, deepened spiritual experience through various meetings including bands and classes, and mission mindedness by sending out exploratory expeditions. The bands and classes later strongly influenced John Wesley, the founder of Methodism. In addition to bands and classes, the third method included Hourly Intercessions. The fourth method included a monthly Missionary Prayer Day.¹⁶ Thus, the Moravians were trained in both prayer and missions.

Moravian Christians who were simply trying to escape persecution in Moravia came to live as refugees in Herrnhut to practice their faith. But Count Zinzendorf challenged their faith and gave them training in intercession and missions, which changed them. This enabled them to not get stuck in their social status and become focused simply on the difficulties of the community. Through their intercessions, Count Zinzendorf

¹⁵ Bengel and Bengel, *Count Zinzendorf: Firstfruit*, Location 454.

¹⁶ Hutton, *A History of Moravian Missions*, Location 180.

opened their eyes to world missions, and they recognized the role and importance of their small community of faith in the world church.

The Moravian Community

The Persecuted group of Moravian Christians called themselves “the Hidden Seed.” They were descended from a very small community of faith called the Unitas Fratrum or the Unity of Brethren. The Unitas Fratrum was a community of faith formed based on the teachings of the reformer Jan Hus. Jan Hus had advocated the doctrine of justification by faith in the Catholic Church one hundred years before Martin Luther. Because of his doctrinal views, the Catholic Church had Jan Hus burned at the stake as a heretic in Prague in 1415.¹⁷

The Hidden Seed, the Moravian Christians, followed the teachings of Jan Hus and, like him, were also persecuted by the religious authorities. The persecution was made worse by the Catholic Church after the Reformation of the 1500s.¹⁸ As a result, these Moravian Christians were looking for a place where they could settle peacefully, live freely in defense of their faith, and avoid persecution from the religious authorities. They found this place when Count Zinzendorf allowed them to live on his land, Herrnhut. Thus, persecuted Moravian Christians began to migrate from Moravia to Herrnhut.

In early June of 1722, the first Moravian family, the Neisser family, arrived in Herrnhut.¹⁹ The Herrnhut community grew rapidly. When the persecuted Christians in

¹⁷ Bengé and Bengé, *Count Zinzendorf: Firstfruit*, Location 454.

¹⁸ Bengé and Bengé, *Count Zinzendorf: Firstfruit*, Location 454.

¹⁹ Bengé and Bengé, *Count Zinzendorf: Firstfruit*, Location 479.

Moravia heard of Herrnhut, they left Moravia and started migrating there. As a result, Herrnhut became a haven for persecuted Moravian Christians.

Herrnhut means “the Lord’s Watch”.²⁰ Herrnhut was originally called Hutberg, which means “Watch Hill.” Johann Heitz, a pietistic Swiss man, had been appointed by Count Zinzendorf as manager over Hutberg, where the Moravians began to migrate and settle. Heitz changed the name from Hutberg to Herrnhut. Heitz explained the name change: “May God grant that your excellence may be able to build on the hill called the Hutberg a town which may not only itself abide under the Lord's Watch, but all the inhabitants of which, so that no silence may be there by day or night.”²¹

Christian David played a major role in helping the persecuted Christians of Moravia migrate to Herrnhut. He began to live in Herrnhut while also having a home in Moravia. David returned often to Moravia and urged other Christians to move to Herrnhut. On his second trip there, as many as eighteen people followed David on a pitch-black night to Herrnhut.²² This news spread very quickly among persecuted Christians in Moravia. Upon learning this, the Catholics of Moravia were outraged and burned David's home in Moravia. That did not stop him. Christian David traveled from town and town, helping persecuted Christians move out of Moravia to Herrnhut.

There were a number of dramatic escape stories. A man, imprisoned in a castle, miraculously found a rope hidden inside the prison room where he was being held. He used the rope to escape the three-story prison. In another incident, some people were

²⁰ Bengé and Bengé, *Count Zinzendorf: Firstfruit*, Location 495.

²¹ Bengé and Bengé, *Count Zinzendorf: Firstfruit*, Location 495.

²² Bengé and Bengé, *Count Zinzendorf: Firstfruit*, Location 542.

imprisoned in chains, but the chains that bound them were suddenly released. The locked prison doors then opened, and they miraculously escaped.²³

More migrated to Herrnhut after escaping from Moravia and the community soon grew to around ninety members. As the Community of Herrnhut grew, problems arose. At first, they worked together, sharing and helping each other. However, as people who speak different languages settled there, communication problems arose. In addition, people who followed the diverse teachings of Jan Hus, John Calvin, and Catholicism also came in. The practices of different religious doctrines caused a problem among the population of religious and theological incompatibility.²⁴ Some members of the Herrnhut community even challenged Count Zinzendorf and opposed everything he did. These problems became a nightmare for Count Zinzendorf, who dreamed of a loving Christian community.

Several people close to Count Zinzendorf who were aware of these problems asked him questions. “Why did you start such a difficult community?” “Why don’t you drive out those who cause trouble?” Whenever these questions were asked, Count Zinzendorf answered: “I could use my power as a landlord to make them all leave, but I have a firm belief that God has gathered these people here for a reason, and I will wait patiently to see what good He brings through them.”²⁵

In the midst of this situation, through the effort of Count Zinzendorf, small groups called bands were formed in the community of Herrnhut. Three groups of two to eight

²³ Bengé and Bengé, *Count Zinzendorf: Firstfruit*, Location 554.

²⁴ Bengé and Bengé, *Count Zinzendorf: Firstfruit*, Location 620.

²⁵ Bengé and Bengé, *Count Zinzendorf: Firstfruit*, Location 642.

people met regularly to study the Bible, sing praises, and pray. Due to the influence of these three bands, when a problem occurred in the community of Herrnhut, members gathered here and there to pray over the problem.²⁶ The Herrnhut Community grew rapidly.

The Moravians' 100-year Intercessory Prayer Movement

The Four Methods of Zinzendorf

The four methods that Count Zinzendorf taught and implemented over four years (1727-1731) throughout the community were important to stabilize the Herrnhut Community and make it a loving Christian community.²⁷ Prior to this there were differing factions that did not always get along. Most notable were two groups at Herrnhut: the stern Moravians and the pietist Lutherans. The four methods implemented over four years allowed the two groups to, as described by the historian J.E. Hutton, from “a duel to a duet.”²⁸

The first method was that Count Zinzendorf taught obedience to the settlers of Herrnhut. On July 4, 1724, he had the members of the community sign a document called the Brotherly Agreement. The Brotherly Agreement allowed differing groups to agree to abide by a common set of rules and guidelines.²⁹ Second, Count Zinzendorf taught the

²⁶ Bengé and Bengé, *Count Zinzendorf: Firstfruit*, Location 705.

²⁷ Hutton, *A History of Moravian Missions*, Location 169.

²⁸ Hutton, *A History of Moravian Missions*, Location 169.

²⁹ Hutton, *A History of Moravian Missions*, Location 169.

importance of Christian charity to the settlers of Herrnhut. As part of this, he invited the community on August 13, 1727, to Berthelsdorf Parish Church to attend the Holy Communion.³⁰ On that day, like the Day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came upon all those gathered. This day is referred to as the Pentecost of the Herrnhut Moravian Community and is regarded as the spiritual birthday of the renewed Moravian Church.”³¹

Third, Count Zinzendorf created Bands, Classes, Hourly Intercessions, Singing Meetings, and the Daily Watchword to deepen the spiritual experience of the settlers of Herrnhut and invited them to participate.³² Fourth, Count Zinzendorf established a missionary focus. Zinzendorf had been attracted to missions since that day as a child when the missionary impulse arose in him. As part of this fourth method, he established a monthly Missionary Prayer Day. In addition, he put these missionary interests into action by sending some of the settlers on expeditions to England, Denmark, Sweden, Hungary, Moravian, and Baltic Provinces.³³

The Beginning of the Prayer Movement

On August 10, 1727, Count Zinzendorf invited Pastor John Rothe to Herrnhut to lead a Sunday afternoon service. As he was preaching, Rothe suddenly fell to his knees and began to pray passionately. Everyone in the service followed him to their knees and began to pray. This prayer continued until well over midnight.³⁴ The next morning,

³⁰ Hutton, *A History of Moravian Missions*, Location 180.

³¹ Hutton, *A History of Moravian Missions*, Location 180.

³² Hutton, *A History of Moravian Missions*, Location 180.

³³ Hutton, *A History of Moravian Missions*, Location 180.

³⁴ Bengé and Bengé, *Count Zinzendorf: Firstfruit*, Location 736.

August 11, Rothe invited the entire Herrnhut Community to the Holy Communion Service of Berthelsdorf Church on Wednesday.³⁵

On the morning of Wednesday, August 13, the Herrnhut community walked to Berthelsdorf Church, a mile away. Pastor Rothe preached on the importance of the Holy Communion to a church full of people.³⁶ People got down on their knees and started singing a hymn: “My soul before Thee prostrate lies, To Thee, its source, my spirit flies.” Crying began to be heard everywhere. The cries grew louder even than the singing.³⁷ At the end of the hymn, Count Zinzendorf led the prayer. He prayed earnestly that not only those gathered there, but everyone in the Herrnhut Community would no longer quarrel, find renewed vigor in Jesus Christ, and truly unite.³⁸ Following his prayer, several others continued to pray. Earnest prayers poured out of their hearts. Again, the cries were louder than the prayers.³⁹ On this day, the Holy Spirit came powerfully among them.

The service ended, but no one left. They continued to pray and sing. A Moravian historian writes about the day as follows:

Church History also abounds in records of special outpourings of the Holy Ghost, and verily the thirteenth of August 1727 was a day of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. We saw the hand of God and His wonders, and we were all under the cloud of our fathers baptized with their Spirit. The Holy Ghost came upon us and in those days great signs and wonders took place in our midst. From that time scarcely a day passed but what we beheld His almighty workings amongst us. A great hunger after the Word of God took possession of us so that we had to have three services every day, viz, 5:00 and 7:30 A.M. and 9:00 P.M. Everyone desired above everything else that the Holy Spirit might have full control. Self-love and

³⁵ Bengel and Bengel, *Count Zinzendorf: Firstfruit*, Location 736.

³⁶ Bengel and Bengel, *Count Zinzendorf: Firstfruit*, Location 736.

³⁷ Bengel and Bengel, *Count Zinzendorf: Firstfruit*, Location 746.

³⁸ Bengel and Bengel, *Count Zinzendorf: Firstfruit*, Location 746.

³⁹ Bengel and Bengel, *Count Zinzendorf: Firstfruit*, Location 746.

self-will as well as all disobedience disappeared and an overwhelming flood of grace swept us all out into the great ocean of Divine Love.⁴⁰

Two weeks after this, on August 27th, twenty-eight men and twenty-eight women, two by two, from the Herrnhut Community, decided to intercede for one hour a day, 24 hours a day, every day for Herrnhut Community and for the world.⁴¹ This was the beginning of the Moravians' 100-year Intercessory Prayer Movement. These intercessory prayers were "maintained twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week for more than hundred years!"⁴²

The beginning of the Prayer Movement was similar to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost on the Apostles.

¹ When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. ² And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. ³ Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. ⁴ All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability (Acts 2:1-4, NRSV).

Almost 2,000 years ago, when 120 saints gathered in the upper room to pray, there was a powerful descent of the Holy Spirit. After this event, the Church of Jesus Christ began. On Wednesday, August 13th, 1727, there was a powerful outpouring of the Holy Spirit when the Moravian saints were gathering in Berthelsdorf Church to pray. Two weeks later, the Moravian 100-year Intercessory Prayer Movement began.

The news of this amazing work of the Holy Spirit that took place in Herrnhut Community began to spread. Communities of faith in other regions sent letters of

⁴⁰ Greenfield and Mirza, *Power from On High*, Location 242.

⁴¹ Bengé and Bengé, *Count Zinzendorf: Firstfruit*, Location 757.

⁴² Timothy Tennent, "4 Lessons to Learn from Count Nicolaus von Zinzendorf and the Moravian Mission." March 4, 2017, Seedbed, <https://seedbed.com/count-nicolaus-von-zinzendorf-and-the-moravian-mission/>.

invitation for Herrnhut members to come to their churches and testify. These invitations were accepted with some even going as far as Italy and England to testify.⁴³ The missionary aspect of Zinzendorf's vision began to grow.

Significantly, all those who were baptized with the Holy Spirit on August 13, 1727, were lay people. But later, many pastors and many missionaries were called out of these lay people.⁴⁴ In the first thirty years of the Moravian 100-year Intercessory Prayer Movement, missionaries from Herrnhut carried the gospel of Christ to the continents of North America, South America, Asia, and Africa, and to almost all countries in Europe. Dr. Gustav Warneck, the well-known German historian and pioneer of missiology, wrote of the Herrnhut community: "The small church in twenty years called into being more Missions than the whole Evangelical Church had in two centuries."⁴⁵

The descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Moravians of Herrnhut on August 13, 1727, led to the 100-year Intercessory Prayer Movement. This movement bore the fruit of amazing world missions. Count Zinzendorf recounted the events of August 13, 1727, as "The day of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the congregation."⁴⁶ He further described this time as follows: "The Saviour permitted to come upon us a Spirit of whom we had hitherto not had any experience or knowledge. Hitherto we had been the leaders and helpers. Now the Holy Spirit Himself took full control of everything and everybody."⁴⁷ Count Zinzendorf prayed to Jesus: "Lord, our High-Priest and Saviour,

⁴³ Bengel and Bengel, *Count Zinzendorf: Firstfruit*, Location 767.

⁴⁴ Greenfield and Mirza, *Power from On High*, Location 266.

⁴⁵ Greenfield and Mirza, *Power from On High*, Location 316.

⁴⁶ Greenfield and Mirza, *Power from On High*, Location 328.

⁴⁷ Greenfield and Mirza, *Power from On High*, Location 343.

pour fire and Spirit's fervor on all our priestly bands; when we are interceding and for Thy people pleading give incense, and hold up our hands."⁴⁸

The Effects of the Prayer Movement

William Carey is known as the father of the modern Christian missionary movement. But in fact, the modern Christian missionary movement began before William Carey. It is a Moravian missionary movement that began by Moravians of Herrnhut.⁴⁹ Timothy C. Tennent, the President of Asbury Theological Seminary and a Professor of Global Christianity, says, "The entire 'great century' of Protestant missions is birthed out of the fervent prayers of the Moravians at Herrnhut!"⁵⁰

The zeal for world missionary work through the intercession of the Moravians at Herrnhut produced surprising results. By 1776 about 226 missionaries had been sent from the community at Herrnhut.⁵¹ By 1791, around three hundred missionaries had been sent from this small Moravian community at Herrnhut to the ends of the earth.⁵² Their passion for world mission is so strong that "some even willing to become slaves in order to fulfill the Great Commission."⁵³

⁴⁸ Greenfield and Mirza, *Power from On High*, Location 343.

⁴⁹ Tennent, "4 Lessons to Learn from Count Nicolaus von Zinzendorf and the Moravian Mission."

⁵⁰ Tennent, "4 Lessons to Learn from Count Nicolaus von Zinzendorf and the Moravian Mission."

⁵¹ "A Brief History of 24/7 Prayer," International House of Prayer Missions Base of Kansas City, accessed January 30, 2022, <https://www.ihopkc.org/prayerroom/history/>.

⁵² "A Prayer Meeting that Lasted 100 Years," Christian History Institute, accessed January 30, 2022, <https://christianhistoryinstitute.org/magazine/article/one-hundred-year-prayer-meeting>.

⁵³ "A Brief History of 24/7 Prayer."

Conclusion

Why was this Moravian Intercessory Prayer Movement able to continue for 100 years? What is different about this Moravian Intercessory Prayer Movement from any other prayer movements in the history of Christianity and the history of revivals? I propose three answers to these questions.

First, the Moravians' Intercessory Prayer Movement was birthed by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. This prayer movement was not planned and started by people. It started with the powerful work of the Holy Spirit. If it started with human planning, effort, and human zeal, it would not have lasted for one hundred years. The reason they were able to continue intercession for this long was that the power of the Holy Spirit, not human power, was leading this prayer movement.

Second, the Moravians' 100-year Intercessory Prayer Movement was not led by any single person. It was not led by any one anointed minister. This prayer movement was a lay movement in which the entire community participated. Historian A. J. Lewis stated, "For over a hundred years the members of the Moravian Church all shared in the 'hourly intercession.' At home and aboard, on land and sea, this prayer watch ascended unceasingly to the Lord."⁵⁴ A 100-year movement has to last beyond the lifetime of any single person.

Third, the Moravians' 100-year Intercessory Prayer Movement was a prayer movement directly connected to world missions. This prayer movement did not pray for the work within the faith community of Moravian Christians or for the resolution of their local problems. This prayer movement was a global prayer movement that went beyond

⁵⁴ "A Prayer Meeting that Lasted 100 Years."

their faith community. The focus was not on internal church issues or even their local community, but on the global kingdom of God. They were not praying for their personal or family subjects. They did not even pray for their community. They prayed for world missions and for the kingdom of God.

The life of the Moravians at Herrnhut was a life of refugees. They had been displaced from their homeland and moved to a foreign land. However, the difficulties of refugee life did not weaken their faith. They did not become discouraged or give up. They prayed. They did not pray for themselves but interceded for the will of God, for the kingdom of God, and for world missions. And this became an amazing intercession movement that lasted one hundred years.

How many difficulties there must have been in those one hundred years? Multiple generations passed. However, the Herrnhut faith community continued to overcome local difficulties and play a very important role in the global church. Importantly, their faith passed on to the second, third, and fourth generations of Herrnhut. These succeeding generations continued their intercession without stopping.

Similar to the Moravian experience at Herrnhut, members of the KEMC-MN are Korean immigrants living in the Hennepin County area of Minnesota, USA. Through this DMin project, members of the KEMC-MN were led to focus not on local difficulties but rather on the role the church plays in the global faith community. The members of KEMC-MN need to be freed from the anxiety associated with the numerical growth of the church due to local difficulties.

An intercessory prayer ministry on a global level will help the church members look away from the local difficulties of a struggling church toward the spiritual impact

they can have in the global kingdom of God. As members of KEMC-MN participated in a six-week intercessory prayer ministry training, they increased their understanding of the role of the church that plays in the global church and had less anxiety about their future.

CHAPTER FOUR

THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS

Introduction

The goal of this DMin project is to change the thoughts of the church members from focusing on numerical growth to spiritual growth. The means is to develop a positive perspective of playing a very important role as a praying church on the global level. The method is to teach members intercessory prayer and helping them overcome their anxiety about the church's future existence through the practice of intercessory prayer for the world churches and missionaries.

One of the reasons church members have anxiety about the future of the church may be that they do not have a sufficient understanding of the true nature of the church. Members often consider the “church” to be the building or even the mechanics of doing church. In this paper I will explore “ecclesiology”, the study of the church, to develop a strong theological foundation for what the church really is.

What is the church? This is the most important question in understanding the church. To explain this theologically is the study of ecclesiology. In search of an answer to the question, “What is a church?,” this paper will examine: (1) what the Bible calls the church, (2) how The United Methodist Church defines church, (3) how the Christian tradition defines the church, and (4) how classical theologians and modern theologians define the church.

First, in order to see what the Bible says about the church, I will examine the idea of church in the Old Testament (although this word is never used in the Old Testament) and the church in the New Testament. Second, in order to see how The United Methodist Church defines the church, I will examine how Article XIII of The Articles of Religion of The United Methodist Church and Article V of The Confession of Faith of The Evangelical United Brethren Church define the church. Third, in order to see how the Christian tradition defines the church, I will examine the definition of the church in the Nicene Creed. Although Christian groups and denominations do not always agree with each other on particular matters of faith, most hold to the confession of faith as proclaimed in the Nicene Creed, produced by the Council of Nicaea in AD 325. Fourth, in order to see how classic theologians and modern theologians define the church, I will examine Saint Augustine's ecclesiology and John Wesley's ecclesiology as classical theologians. In particular, I will examine John Wesley's ecclesiology through Wesley's "Explanatory Notes on the New Testament" and his sermon, "Of the Church." I will then examine the ecclesiology of modern theologians, Bryan P. Stone, R. C. Sproul, Avery Cardinal Dulles, Beth Felker Jones, Scott J. Jones, William J. Abraham, and David F. Watson.

In conclusion, by synthesizing the biblical ecclesiology, the United Methodist Church's ecclesiology, the Christian tradition's ecclesiology, as well as the ecclesiology of classical and modern theologians, I will find the answer to the question "What is the church?" I will then see if the church that is common to all theological ecclesiology is the same as the church that Jesus says he will establish.

Going further, I will find an answer to the question, “Who is the owner of the church?” Ecclesiology will point to Jesus as being the owner of the church. This will lead to a conclusion of what the role of the church is according to Jesus, the owner of the church. An important role of the church is to be a praying church for all nations and that it is important for church members to intercede for the world churches and missionaries. In doing so, I will explain why a biblically and theologically correct ecclesiology plays an important role as the theological foundation for this DMin Project.

Biblical Ecclesiology

How does the Bible describe the church? To answer this question, we must look at the idea of church in the Old Testament and the church in the New Testament. Although the word “church” does not occur in the Old Testament, how does the idea of church appear in the Old Testament? God chose Abraham and called Abraham's descendants, the Israelites, “My people.” In Genesis 17:7, God said to Abraham: “I will establish my covenant between me and you, and your offspring after you throughout their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you.”¹ In Exodus 6:7, God said to the Israelites through Moses: “I will take you as my people, and I will be your God. You shall know that I am the Lord your God, who has freed you from the burdens of the Egyptians.” In Jeremiah 31:33, God tells the Israelites: “But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be

¹ Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations in this chapter are from the New Revised Standard Version®. Copyright © 1989 by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

their God, and they shall be my people.” In Ezekiel 36:28, God tells the Israelites: “Then you shall live in the land that I gave to your ancestors; and you shall be my people, and I will be your God.” The appearance of the idea of the church in the Old Testament is represented as “the people of Israel” or “the people of God.”

In the four gospels, the church is shown as a bunch of followers of Jesus. At first there were twelve people and then seventy-two people. Luke 9:1-2 says: “Now He called the twelve together and gave them power and authority over all the demons, and the power to heal diseases. And He sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to perform healing.” Luke 10:1-2 says: “Now after this the Lord appointed seventy-two others, and sent them in pairs ahead of Him to every city and place where He Himself was going to come. And He was saying to them, “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore plead with the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest his.” Bryan P. Stone, the E. Stanley Jones Professor of Evangelism at Boston University School of Theology, writes, “The New Testament Gospel narratives afford us insight into the early church’s understanding of itself as a continuation of the mission and ministry of Jesus, especially in its record of the activities and sayings attributed to Jesus in gathering together a community of followers and sending them into the world as witnesses.”²

The events of the Day of Pentecost, recorded in Acts 2:1-4, are generally regarded as the birth of the Christian Church today.

¹ When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. ² And suddenly a noise like a violent rushing wind came from heaven, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. ³ And tongues that looked like fire appeared to them, distributing themselves, and a tongue rested on each one of them. ⁴ And

² Bryan P. Stone, *A Reader in Ecclesiology* (New York, NY: Ashgate Publishing, 2016), 4.

they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with different tongues, and the Spirit was giving them the ability to speak out.

The first Christian Church born by the Holy Spirit was 120 people who believed in Jesus as the Messiah who gathered in the Upper Room in Jerusalem. Right after the birth of the Christian Church, there was an immediate growth. “So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and that day there were added about three thousand souls. They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer” (Acts 2:41-42). Three thousand people believed in Jesus as the Messiah after hearing the Apostle Peter’s sermon. Scripture records that people were added; it did not say that the buildings were added.

How does the church appear in the New Testament? In the New Testament, the appearance of the church appears as a “community of faith” or “the body of Christ.” Romans 12:5 says: “so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another.” 1 Corinthians 10:17 says: “Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread.” 1 Corinthians 12:27 says: “Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.” Ephesians 4:12 says: “to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ.” Ephesians 5:23 says: “For the husband is the head of the wife just as Christ is the head of the church, the body of which he is the Savior.” Sometimes the church undergoes difficulties. Hebrews 13:3 says: “Remember those who are in prison, as though you were in prison with them; those who are being tortured, as though you yourselves were being tortured.” Colossians 1:24 says: “I am now rejoicing in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I am completing what is lacking in Christ’s afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church.”

When the Apostle Paul writes letters to the churches he has planted, he defines the church by the terms he uses toward those churches. The Apostle Paul uses the term “saints” to refer to the churches. To the church in Rome, “To all God's beloved in Rome, who are called to be saints...” (Rom. 1:7) To the church in Corinth, “To the church of God that is in Corinth, to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints...” (1 Cor. 1:2). To the church at Ephesus, “...To the saints who are in Ephesus and are faithful in Christ Jesus” (Eph. 1:1). To the church in Philippi, “...To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, with the bishops and deacons” (Phil. 1:1). To the church at Colossae, “To the saints and faithful brothers and sisters in Christ in Colossae...” (Col. 1:2). In each of these cases, “saints” refers to the faithful followers of Jesus Christ in each of these communities.

The church that appeared in the Bible through the Old and New Testaments is a “community of faith,” a gathering of believers in Jesus Christ. The Bible refers to this as “the body of Christ.” Paul further describes them as “saints,” faithful followers of Jesus Christ.

Ecclesiology of The United Methodist Church

How does The United Methodist Church define the church? This is important as KEMC-MN has roots in the heritage of the UMC. Scott J. Jones, former professor at Perkins School of Theology and current bishop of The United Methodist Church, has this to say about the ecclesiology defined in the doctrine of The United Methodist Church. “When taken together, Article XIII and Confession V are best understood to be speaking of the ‘Church universal, which is Body of Christ’ of which the United Methodist Church

understands itself to be a part.”³ Jones here refers to the two foundational doctrinal documents of The United Methodist Church, The Articles of Religion of the Methodist Church and the Confession of Faith of the Evangelical United Brethren.

Article XIII of the Articles of Religion of The Methodist Church defines the church, specifically the visible church: “The visible church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men [sic] in which the pure Word of God is preached, and the Sacraments duly administered according to Christ’s ordinance, in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same.”⁴ According to this definition of “the visible church” in Article XIII, a church has three marks. The first is that the church is “a congregation of faithful men [and women].” Second, in the church, “the pure Word of God is preached.” And third, in the church, “the Sacraments”, namely baptism and communion, are “duly administered.”

Article V of the Confession of Faith of The Evangelical United Brethren Church defines the church:

We believe the Christian Church is the community of all true believers under the Lordship of Christ. We believe it is one, only, apostolic and catholic. It is redemptive fellowship in which the Word of God is preached by men divinely called, and the sacraments are duly administered according to Christ’s own appointment. Under the discipline of the Holy Spirit the Church exists for the maintenance of worship, the edification of believers and the redemption of the world.⁵

³ Scott J. Jones, *United Methodist Doctrine: The Extreme Center* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2002), 248.

⁴ *The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church 2012* (Nashville, TN: The United Methodist Publishing House, 2012), 66.

⁵ *The Book of Discipline 2012*, 71.

According to the definition of “the Christian Church” in Confession V, a church has four marks. First, the church is “the community of all true believers under the Lordship of Christ”. Second, the church is “one, holy, apostolic and catholic”. Third, in the church, “the Word of God is preached and the sacraments are duly administered.” And fourth, the mission of the church is “the maintenance of worship, the edification of believers and the redemption of the world.”

Through Article XIII and Confession V, the church is defined for The United Methodist Church. In both, the church is a “community of faith,” a gathering of believers in Jesus Christ. Note also that the church is also defined through its actions, including the preaching of the Word of God and the proper administration of the Sacraments.

Ecclesiology of the Christian Tradition

Over the past 2,000 years, numerous Christian groups and denominations have sprung up all over the world. There are Roman Catholics, Eastern Orthodox Christians, Lutherans, Baptists, Quakers, Presbyterians, Anglicans, Episcopalians, Methodists, Seventh-Day Adventists, Pentecostals and many others self-identified as independent or non-denominational. They may have different doctrines. They may disagree with each other on certain religious matters. But all true Christian groups agree on one profession of faith. This is the Nicene Creed produced by the Council of Nicaea in AD 325. The Nicene Creed is widely regarded as the statement of faith of the orthodox Christianity in both the eastern and western churches.⁶

⁶ Alister E. McGrath, *The Christian Theology Reader*, Fourth Edition (West Sussex, United Kingdom: Blackwell Publishing, 2011), 9.

The Nicene Council was in response to the Arian heresy that argued that the Christ was the “first among the creatures.” This argument denied the full divinity of Christ. In June of 325, the Council of Nicaea gathered and formulated the statement of faith of the orthodox Christianity to affirm the full divinity of Christ against the Arians’ understanding of Jesus Christ.⁷

The Nicene Creed says of the Church: “I believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.” William J Abraham and David F. Watson, in their book *Key United Methodist Beliefs*, state, “In the Nicene Creed, a statement of faith written in the fourth century that has long helped define the parameters of Christian belief, we read that the Church has four distinct marks: it is one, holy, catholic, and apostolic.”⁸ Each of these are discussed in turn.

First, the church is “one”, meaning “nevertheless there are many different Christian groups and denominations though we may disagree on matters of faith, some of which are quite important, we all have one Lord, Jesus Christ.”⁹ To reiterate, all Christian groups and churches are under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. The Bible says of this that “Christ is the head of the Church” (Eph. 5:23). We are all “one” because all Christian groups and churches have one Lord, Jesus Christ.

Second, the church is “holy,” meaning “we are holy because God makes us holy.”¹⁰ Scott J. Jones explains in his book *United Methodist Doctrine: The Extreme*

⁷ McGrath, *The Christian Theology Reader*, 9.

⁸ William J. Abraham and David F. Watson, *Key United Methodist Beliefs* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2013), 90.

⁹ Abraham and Watson, *Key United Methodist Beliefs*, 90.

¹⁰ Abraham and Watson, *Key United Methodist Beliefs*, 91.

Center, “Just as God is holy, belonging to God confers a kind of holiness as well.”¹¹ Holy literally means separated as sacred. The church is separated from the secular world as a sacred gathering.

Third, the church is “catholic” meaning that the church is “universal.” Catholic with a capital “C” refers to the Roman Catholic Church. But catholic with a lowercase “c” means “universal,” specifically referring to believers in Jesus Christ throughout the world.¹² Ultimately, this means that the church is not for one group, one people, one race, or one nation, but for all people in the world. “God intends for the Church to reach throughout the world, and all who confess Jesus as Lord are part of the Church.”¹³ We can also find this word “catholic” in the Apostles’ Creed. The Apostles’ Creed is used more widely in the western churches. The Apostles’ Creed says, “I believe in the Holy Spirit; in the holy catholic church.”

Fourth, the church is “apostolic,” by which “we mean that the faith that we proclaim stretches back to the earliest followers of Jesus.”¹⁴ In 1 John 1:1-3 we read:

¹ We declare to you what was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the word of life—² this life was revealed, and we have seen it and testify to it, and declare to you the eternal life that was with the Father and was revealed to us—³ we declare to you what we have seen and heard so that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.

¹¹ Jones, *United Methodist Doctrine*, 248.

¹² Abraham and Watson, *Key United Methodist Beliefs*, 91.

¹³ Abraham and Watson, *Key United Methodist Beliefs*, 92.

¹⁴ Abraham and Watson, *Key United Methodist Beliefs*, 92.

Along with the Apostles who were the first followers of Jesus, we too have fellowship with them and with Jesus. What we proclaim today is the same faith proclaimed by the early church.

Ecclesiology of Classical and Modern Theologians

Frank H. Baker, in his book, *John Wesley and the Church of England*, claims that “throughout his adult life Wesley responded with varying degrees of enthusiasm to two fundamentally different views of the church.”¹⁵ The first was the formal Church of England and the second was a broader view of church. Wesley's ecclesiology was finally formed in his “Explanatory Notes on the New Testament” and in his sermon “Of the Church.” Snyder says that “Wesley’s comment on Acts 5:11 is his most comprehensive brief definition of the New Testament Church: ‘A company of men, called by the gospel, grafted into Christ by baptism, animated by love, united by all kind of fellowship, and disciplined by the death of Ananias and Sapphira.’”¹⁶ Snyder says furthermore that “In his sermon ‘Of the Church’ Wesley said the Church is, in the proper sense, ‘a congregation, or body of people, united together in the service of God.’”¹⁷

John Wesley defines the catholic church as follows in his sermon “Of the Church.” “The catholic or universal Church is, all the persons in the universe whom God hath so called out of the world as to entitle them to the preceding character; as to be ‘one

¹⁵ Howard A. Snyder, “Wesley’s Concept of the Church,” *The Asbury Journal* (Dec. 1978), <https://place.asburyseminary.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1710&context=asburyjournal>, 38.

¹⁶ Snyder, “Wesley’s Concept of the Church,” 38.

¹⁷ Snyder, “Wesley’s Concept of the Church,” 38.

body', united by 'one Spirit'; having 'one faith, one hope, one baptism,' one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in them all."¹⁸

John Wesley's definition of the Church as "a congregation of faithful people" created a very distinctive form of church life called the class meeting. Abraham and Watson state: "He turned church life into that of a family marked by warm fellowship. He created little churches within the bigger parish churches of his day."¹⁹ The small churches John Wesley created were societies, class meetings, and band meetings. "To be a Methodist was to be a member of a society, then to be a member of a small class of about a dozen, and, in the earliest days, then to be a member of a small band of six or seven brothers or sisters where one shared the most intimate details of one's life in strictest confidence."²⁰

John Wesley regarded The Church of England as the best church. He loved The Church of England and did not want to leave The Church of England. When John Wesley first created the Methodist Society, he made it part of The Church of England. And "Wesley stressed that he intended to remain in the church of his birth and wanted Methodists to do likewise. In 1758, he even included his 'Reasons Against a Separation from the Church of England' as part of a collection of Charles Wesley hymns."²¹ However, he understood the Church of England to be far from the true Church, and the Methodist Society he created eventually became the Methodist Church.

¹⁸ Robert W. Burtner and Robert E. Chiles, *John Wesley's Theology* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1982), 225.

¹⁹ Abraham and Watson, *Key United Methodist Beliefs*, 89.

²⁰ Abraham and Watson, *Key United Methodist Beliefs*, 89.

²¹ Heather Hahn, "What John Wesley Teaches About Church Unity," *UM News*, accessed November 29, 2022, <https://www.umnews.org/en/news/what-john-wesley-teaches-about-church-unity>.

John Wesley believed that a company of faithful (or believing) people is the essence of a Church.²² He considered the faithful people to be the true believers. And he believed that a Methodist as the true believer must have marks of the fruits of living faith. John Wesley answered the question, “What then is the mark of a true Methodist?” with “A Methodist is one who has ‘the love of God shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost given unto him.’”²³ He then continued with a dozen more specific marks. Russell E. Richey says in his book, *Marks of Methodism: Theology in Ecclesial Practice*, that “He concluded with two paragraphs, one of which begins, “These are the principles and practices of our SECT [sic]; these are the marks of a true Methodist.” The second begins, “By these marks, by these fruits of a living faith, do we labour to distinguish ourselves from the unbelieving world, from all whose minds or lives are not according to the gospel of Christ,”²⁴

Prior to Wesley, St. Augustine made a distinction between the invisible church and the visible church. The invisible church refers to “those who make up the true church of Jesus Christ; that is those who are truly regenerated.”²⁵ The visible church refers to “the body of all who claim to be in a state of grace and who identify with the church.”²⁶ R. C. Sproul, in his book *Everyone’s A Theologian: An Introduction to Systematic Theology* says that “as Augustine observed, the invisible church is found substantially

²² Snyder, “Wesley’s Concept of the Church,” 38-39.

²³ Russell E. Richey, *Marks of Methodism: Theology in Ecclesial Practice* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2005), 2.

²⁴ Richey, *Marks of Methodism*, 3.

²⁵ R. C. Sproul, *Everyone’s a Theologian: An Introduction to Systematic Theology* (Sanford, FL: Reformation Trust Publishing, 2014), 262.

²⁶ Sproul, *Everyone’s a Theologian*, 262.

within the visible church. Thus, the invisible church is made up of the true believers within the visible church.”²⁷ Sproul further says that “Augustine also pointed out that there are true believers who are members of the invisible church, who for a variety of reasons, cannot be found on the rolls of institutional churches.”²⁸

St. Augustine had a very strong position regarding the holiness of the true church. St. Augustine believed that the true church really is Christ's body.²⁹ But “objectively, rather than conditionally.”³⁰ This came about because he was strongly opposed to the Donatists' argument. Stone says that “While the Donatists argued that the validity of the sacraments was dependent upon the lived holiness of the clergy, Augustine rejected this as perfectionism and defended the objective holiness of the sacraments based on the church as the body of Christ and the bride of Christ.”³¹ Augustine argued that “The church’s holiness is a participation of the holiness of Christ”.³² That is why he argued that the holiness of Christ is the source of the church's holiness.

St. Augustine believed that the true church really is Christ’s body, but he viewed that the Christ’s body is a “mixed body.” The meaning of the mixed body according to St. Augustine is that the church is a mixture of righteous people and unrighteous people. Alister E. McGrath, in his book *The Christian Theology Reader*, says that St. Augustine was convinced by “his reading of the Parable of the Tares (Matt. 13:24-30) that the

²⁷ Sproul, *Everyone’s A Theologian*, 262.

²⁸ Sproul, *Everyone’s A Theologian*, 262.

²⁹ Stone, *A Reader in Ecclesiology*, 43.

³⁰ Stone, *A Reader in Ecclesiology*, 43.

³¹ Stone, *A Reader in Ecclesiology*, 43.

³² Stone, *A Reader in Ecclesiology*, 43.

church was like a field, in which both wheat and weeds grew side by side.”³³ St.

Augustine says that in the church there are true Christians who are separated from the world, and there are also false Christians who are in the church but actually belong to the world. However, Augustine says that “God alone is the judge and arbiter of who is a true Christian and God’s judgment on this matter cannot be fully known in advance.”³⁴

Avery Cardinal Dulles is a respected American Catholic theologian. Dulles, in his book *Models of The Church*, says that “theologically the term “Church” refers to the mystery of Christ as realized in the community of those who believe in him and are assembled in his name.”³⁵ Regarding the “catholicity” of the church, Dulles “sets out five general ways in which the term ‘catholic’ has been used in Christian history.”³⁶ In one of five ways, he says that the term “catholic” means “Universal as opposed to local or particular. This seems to be the primary meaning of ‘catholic’ as used in a number of important texts from the early Fathers of the Church, notably Ignatius of Antioch and the Martyrdom of Polycarp, though there is some disagreement about the precise interpretation of these texts.”³⁷

Beth Felker Jones, in her book *Practicing Christian Doctrine: An Introduction to Thinking and Living Theologically*, says that “the church is the people of God, called out to bear visible witness, in the body and as a body, to the free and transformative gift of

³³ McGrath, *The Christian Theology Reader*, 412.

³⁴ McGrath, *The Christian Theology Reader*, 413.

³⁵ Avery Cardinal Dulles, *Models of The Church* (New York: Image Books, 2002), 114.

³⁶ McGrath, *The Christian Theology Reader*, 446.

³⁷ McGrath, *The Christian Theology Reader*, 446-447.

grace we have received in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.”³⁸ Jones further says that “the image of Church as the body of Christ is one of organic community.”³⁹ Jones explains the meaning of “the church bearing visible witness as a body” that “like the ark of circumcision for the people of Israel, the church is to be the people who bear, visibly and in the body, four marks confessed in the Nicene Creed: the church is “one holy catholic and apostolic.”⁴⁰

Conclusion

Jesus asked his disciples. “Who do you say that I am?” (Matt. 16:15). Simon Peter answered, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God” (Matt. 16:16). When Jesus heard this answer from Simon Peter, he responded, “I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it” (Matt. 16:18). The word “church” here is “ekklesia” in the original Greek. “Ekklesia is made up of the prefix ek-, which means ‘out of’ or ‘from,’ and a form of the verb kaleo, which means ‘to call.’ Thus, ekklesia means ‘the called-out ones.’”⁴¹ Another Greek word meaning church is “kyriakon.” Kyriakon gave rise to the word “church” in English. “Kyriakon refers to those who are possessed or owned by the kyrios, or Lord.”⁴²

³⁸ Beth Felker Jones, *Practicing Christian Doctrine: An Introduction to Thinking and Living Theologically* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2014), 195.

³⁹ Jones, *Practicing Christian Doctrine*, 196.

⁴⁰ Jones, *Practicing Christian Doctrine*, 198.

⁴¹ Sproul, *Everyone's A Theologian*, 261.

⁴² Sproul, *Everyone's A Theologian*, 261.

The church that Jesus said he would build is not a building, but “a gathering of called-out ones,” that is, a community of faith. Who is the head of the church? Jesus said, “My church.” In other words, the owner of the church is Jesus. After all, the church is a gathering or assembly of “called-out” people who profess Jesus as “Kyrios” or Lord. In other words, the essence of the church is people, not buildings. And it is not just people, but a community of faith that confess Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. The apostle Paul referred to these people as “saints.”

One of the representative images of the church spoken of in the Bible, especially in the New Testament, is that of a head and body. The Apostle Paul says, “The head of the church is Jesus Christ (Eph. 5:23), and the church is the body of Christ (Eph. 4:12)”. When the body moves, the head gives orders. The body cannot move on its own. The body is controlled by the head and directed by the head. The church does not belong to the pastor. It does not belong to any person, clergy, or laity. The church belongs to Jesus. Therefore, the church is not moved by people's thoughts, opinions, and claims, but by the thoughts of Jesus, the opinions of Jesus, and the claims of Jesus. In other words, the saints, the body of the church, must obey the commands and words of Jesus, the head and owner of the church.

Sproul states, “The church is not a building, but the church is like a building that has a foundation, pillars, and walls. The vast majority of Christians believe that Christ is the foundation of the church, but that is incorrect. Christ is the cornerstone. The actual foundation is the Apostles and the Prophets (Eph. 2:20). The rest of the church is made up of individual stones (Eph. 2:21-22; 1 Pet. 2:5). Every believer in Christ who is part of

the visible church is a building stone of the church of God.”⁴³ A place where saints gather to worship Jesus Christ, the Savior, is called a sanctuary. In the Old Testament, there was a sanctuary that was given to the Israelites to worship God, and that was the tabernacle and the temple. Jesus declared this as “My house” and then, what the saints gathered in “My house” should do. “My house will be a house of prayer for all nations.” (Mark 11:17).

As a house of prayer for all nations, the church as a community of faith that confesses Jesus as Lord becomes the true church of Jesus Christ when it intercedes for all nations. If the members of the KEMC-MN hold to this correct ecclesiology and are faithful to the church's true role of interceding for the churches and missionaries around the world, then they will have less anxiety about the future of the church that comes from focusing only on numerical growth.

⁴³ Sproul, *Everyone's a Theologian*, 265-266.

CHAPTER FIVE

INTERDISCIPLINARY FOUNDATIONS

Introduction

The theme of this DMin Project is intercessory prayer. I want the members of the Korean Evangelical Methodist Church of Minnesota to have a correct biblical and theological understanding of the church that focuses on intercession for nations, world churches, and missionaries. Having a correct understanding of church will change their perspectives on the church from internally focused to globally minded. Church members will have a global perspective on the church as they intercede for nations, world churches and missionaries.

E. James Baesler, Associate Professor in the Department of Communication and Theatre Arts at Old Dominion University, states, “prayer is generally defined as a spiritual communication with God.”¹ The prophetic voice of God says in Jeremiah 33:3, “Call to Me and I will answer you, and I will tell you great and mighty things, which you do not know.” Prayer includes asking God and having God hear and answer. In other words, it is a dialogue between the person praying and God. So, prayer is not one-way communication, but two-way communication. Since prayer is communication,

¹ E. James Baesler, “An Introduction to Prayer Research in Communication: Functions, Contexts, and Possibilities,” *Communication and Theatre Arts Faculty Publications* (2012), https://digitalcommons.odu.edu/communication_fac_pubs/10, 2.

Communication Theory can provide interdisciplinary resources for developing skills for those who pray.

In the Bible, from Genesis to Revelation, God's people heard God's voice. Mark and Patti Virkler in their book, *Four Keys to Hearing God's Voice*, say that “the Bible itself teaches us that in addition to examining Scriptures, we also need a personal relationship with God in which He speaks directly to us.”² Intercessory prayer, in communication, desperately requires the skill of listening rather than the skill of speaking. When young Samuel was sleeping in the temple, “the Lord called Samuel” (1 Sam. 3:4). God called, “Samuel, Samuel,” but Samuel did not know that the voice was the voice of God. He thought that the High Priest Eli was calling him, so he went to Eli. In 1 Samuel 3:7 it reads: “Now Samuel did not yet know the Lord, nor had the word of the Lord yet been revealed to him.” Samuel had never heard the voice of God. God called Samuel three times, but Samuel did not know that it was God's voice. Later, the High Priest Eli taught Samuel that the voice was the voice of God.

When we pray for intercession, we must know what kind of voice the voice of God is. This is so that we can hear when God speaks. By hearing the voice of God, we understand God's heart and know God's will. Therefore, communication is the foundation for hearing God's voice in our prayers. In this chapter, I will explore the definition of communication, the process of communication, interpersonal communication, listening, and communication in the Bible.

² Mark Virkler and Patti Virkler, *Four Keys to Hearing God's Voice* (Shippensburg, PA: Destiny Image Publishing Inc., 2010), 20.

Definition and Process of Communication

Definition of Communication

The root word for “communication” in Latin is *communicare*, which means to share, or to make common.³ The following is a list of definitions of the word “communication”:

- Oxford Dictionary defines communication as “the imparting or exchange of information by speaking, writing, or using some other medium.”⁴
- Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines communication as “a process by which information is exchanged between individuals through a common system of symbols, signs, or behavior.”⁵
- Oxford Learners Dictionaries defines communication as “the activity or process of expressing ideas and feelings or of giving people information.”⁶
- Britannica Dictionary defines communication as “the act or process of using words, sounds, signs, or behaviors to express or exchange information or to express your ideas, thoughts, feelings, etc., to someone else.”⁷

³ Ernest Weekley, “An Etymological Dictionary of Modern English,” Vol. 1 (New York, NY: Dover Publications, 1967), 338.

⁴ Sarika Joshi, “Nature and Process of Communication,” <https://aissmschmct.in/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Chapter-1-Nature-Process-of-communication.pdf>, 1.

⁵ Merriam-Webster Dictionary, accessed January 5, 2023, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/communication>.

⁶ Oxford Learners Dictionaries, accessed January 5, 2023, https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/us/definition/american_english/communication.

⁷ Britannica Dictionary, accessed January 5, 2023, <https://www.britannica.com/dictionary/communication#:~:text=Britannica%20Dictionary%20definition%20of%20COMMUNICATION,human%20communication>.

- According to Pearson and Nelson, Communication is defined as “the process of understanding and sharing meaning.”⁸
- According to Skills You Need, communication is defined as “simply the act of transferring information from one place to another.”⁹

From these definitions, the common theme words defining communication are “exchange” and “understanding”. To simply summarize, communication is “the process of exchanging information and understanding the meaning of the information exchanged.” Note that communication usually is defined as interaction between two entities and that understanding is needed, without which there is no true communication.

Process of Communication

The ultimate goal of communication is understanding. In order to achieve understanding, communication goes through a certain process. For communication to take place, three elements are required. The first is the sender, the second is the recipient, and the third is the message. The process of communication is “a message is sent by the sender through a communication channel to one or more recipients.”¹⁰ In a two-way communication, feedback of the message is sent by the recipients through a communication channel to the sender.

⁸ J. Pearson & P. Nelson, *An Introduction to Human Communication: Understanding and Sharing* (Boston, MA: McGraw-Hill, 2000), 6.

⁹ Skills You Need, *An Introduction to Communication Skills* (Skills You Need Ltd, 2020), 6.

¹⁰ Skills You Need, *An Introduction to Communication Skills*, 9.

The person who initiates the communication process is called the sender. The communication process begins when the sender recognizes the need to communicate.¹¹ The person receiving the encoded message from the sender is called the recipient. Recipients can be an individual or a group of individuals.¹² The message is an idea transformed into words or other communication forms.¹³ The communication channel is “the vehicle which facilitates the sender to convey the message to the recipient.”¹⁴

Communication channels include spoken or verbal, non-verbal, written, or visual methods. The spoken or verbal communication method uses voice in face-to-face, telephone, radio or television and other media. The non-verbal communication method uses body language, gestures, facial expressions, tone and pitch of voice, clothing or actions. The written communication method uses printed or digital media such as letters, e-mails, books, magazines, the internet, or other media. The visual communication method uses graphs, charts, maps, logos, and other visualizations.¹⁵ When a person communicates with someone, more than one method may be used at any time.

Misunderstandings can occur at any stage of the communication process. This can be when a message is passed from sender to recipient through a communication channel, or when feedback about the message is passed from recipient to sender.¹⁶ To reduce misunderstanding in the communication process and overcome barriers that hinder

¹¹ Joshi, “Nature and Process of Communication,” 11.

¹² Joshi, “Nature and Process of Communication,” 12.

¹³ Joshi, “Nature and Process of Communication,” 11.

¹⁴ Joshi, “Nature and Process of Communication,” 11.

¹⁵ Skills You Need, *An Introduction to Communication Skills*, 8.

¹⁶ Skills You Need, *An Introduction to Communication Skills*, 9.

communication, the most important thing is to select the appropriate communication channel.

When a sender sends a message to a recipient, the message must be encoded in a form suitable for the selected communication channel. Each communication channel requires different forms of encoding. For example, “text written for a report will not work well if broadcast via a radio program; the short, abbreviated text used in text messages would be inappropriate if sent via a letter; and complex data may be best communicated using a graph, chart or other visualization.”¹⁷ Encoding takes place when the sender formulates his or her idea into a message to be transmitted to the recipient, using a series of verbal, non-verbal, written or visual.¹⁸

The encoded message is delivered to the recipient through the selected communication channel. At this time, the recipient needs to decode the message. Decoding is “a process by which the recipient interprets the message and translates it into meaningful information.”¹⁹ Recipient will “decode and understand the message in different ways based upon many factors” such as “their experience and understanding of the context of the message, their psychological state, and the time and place of receipt.”²⁰

Feedback is “the response given by the recipient of the message to the sender of the message.”²¹ In a two-way communication, the recipient of the message is “likely to provide feedback on how he or she has understood the message through the

¹⁷ Skills You Need, *An Introduction to Communication Skills*, 10.

¹⁸ Joshi, “Nature and Process of Communication,” 11.

¹⁹ Joshi, “Nature and Process of Communication,” 12.

²⁰ Skills You Need, *An Introduction to Communication Skills*, 12.

²¹ Sarika Joshi, “Nature and Process of Communication,” 12.

communication channel.²² When a recipient delivers feedback to a sender, the recipient can choose the communication channel chosen by the sender, but the recipient can also choose a different communication channel. For example, “feedback during a face-to-face or telephone conversation will usually be immediate and direct, but feedback to a message conveyed via TV or radio will be indirect and may be delayed, or even reconveyed through other media such as the internet.”²³

Interpersonal Communication and Listening

Interpersonal Communication

According to Baesler, the working definition of interpersonal communication is

an interactive process whereby two individuals in the context of a personal relationship (some level of personal knowledge and intimacy is necessary) and particular situation, create, transmit, receive, and coordinate their symbolic verbal and nonverbal messages with the intent to share meaning with one another.²⁴

Interpersonal communication is not optional.²⁵ It is easy to discover that it is impossible for us to say we are not communicating with someone. The more we try not to communicate, the more we actually communicate. We communicate much more honestly through non-verbal communication than through spoken or verbal communication.²⁶ No matter how small our body gestures, no matter how small facial expressions, or no matter

²² Skills You Need, *An Introduction to Communication Skills*, 11.

²³ Skills You Need, *An Introduction to Communication Skills*, 11.

²⁴ E. James Baesler, “Interpersonal Christian Prayer and Communication,” *Communication and Theatre Arts Faculty Publications* (1997), https://digitalcommons.odu.edu/communication_fac_pubs/9, 9.

²⁵ Skills You Need, *An Introduction to Communication Skills*, 12.

²⁶ Skills You Need, *An Introduction to Communication Skills*, 12.

how small the amount of eye contact, we are actually communicating with other people.

All interpersonal communication is always complex and always a two-way process.

Interpersonal communication consists of five elements. First is communicators, second is message, third is noise, fourth is feedback, and fifth is context.²⁷

The first element that makes up interpersonal communication is communicators. For interpersonal communication to occur, there must be at least two people. They are sender and receiver. The two people exchange messages with each other.

The second element that makes up interpersonal communication is the message. Messages include verbal messages and non-verbal messages. A verbal message is the speech used or information conveyed. Non-verbal messages are messages exchanged such as facial expressions, tone of voice, gestures, and body language.²⁸

The third element of interpersonal communication is noise. Noise refers to “anything that distorts the message, so that what is received is different from what was intended by the speaker.”²⁹ Noise includes physical noise and non-physical noise. Physical noise is anything that interferes with communication, such as background sounds or a low-flying jet plane.³⁰ Non-physical noise is anything that can lead to misunderstanding of communication, such as the use of complicated jargon, inappropriate body language, inattention, disinterest, or cultural differences.³¹

²⁷ Skills You Need, *An Introduction to Communication Skills*, 14.

²⁸ Skills You Need, *An Introduction to Communication Skills*, 14.

²⁹ Skills You Need, *An Introduction to Communication Skills*, 14.

³⁰ Skills You Need, *An Introduction to Communication Skills*, 14.

³¹ Skills You Need, *An Introduction to Communication Skills*, 14.

The fourth element of interpersonal communication is feedback. Feedback is “the message returned by the receiver.”³² Feedback is the receiver’s reaction to the message sent by the sender. This allows “the sender to regulate, adapt or repeat the message to improve communication.”³³

The fifth element that composes interpersonal communication is context. All communication has a context.³⁴ If you overlook the context, interpersonal communication will fail. The context of communication includes the situational context where the communication takes place and the social context such as the roles, responsibilities and relative status of the participants.³⁵ Scott McLean says that “the context of the communication interaction involves the setting, scene, and expectations of the individuals involved.”³⁶ Understanding the context of interpersonal communication is critical to avoiding misunderstanding and allowing interpersonal communication to be more effective and successful.

Baessler says that “prayer operates in a contextual dialectic, embedded in particular communication contexts that range from a single individual to a global community.”³⁷ According to Baessler, communicative prayer contexts includes “individual prayer at different stages in the lifecycle, partners seeking forgiveness in the dyadic context, cognitive and affective experiences during individual prayer, individual,

³² Skills You Need, *An Introduction to Communication Skills*, 15.

³³ Skills You Need, *An Introduction to Communication Skills*, 15.

³⁴ Skills You Need, *An Introduction to Communication Skills*, 15.

³⁵ Skills You Need, *An Introduction to Communication Skills*, 15.

³⁶ Scott McLean, *The Basics of Interpersonal Communication* (Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon, 2005), 10.

³⁷ Baessler, “An Introduction to Prayer Research in Communication,” 2.

interpersonal, and group prayer during times of illness, and prophetic prayer in individual and group contexts.”³⁸

There are three problems that affect the context of communication: time, location, and misconceptions.³⁹ Time is fundamental to successful interpersonal communication. It is important to hold the conversation at a suitable time and to have enough time for the conversation to be successful. Depending on the type of conversation, location matters. It is not appropriate to have a private conversation in a place where there are many people. Also, it is not appropriate to have a conversation in an uncomfortable and noisy place. Misconceptions arise when we “stereotype people and ... therefore develop inaccurate misconceptions and false assumptions.”⁴⁰ Successful conversations cannot happen if you have these inaccurate misconceptions or false assumptions.

Listening

The most important thing in interpersonal communication is actually listening, not speaking. Listening is “the ability to accurately receive and interpret message in the communication process.”⁴¹ Listening is the key to all effective and successful communications. With the right key, you can open any huge, tightly locked door. However, if you try to open a locked door without a key, no matter how hard you try, it will not open.

³⁸ Baesler, “An Introduction to Prayer Research in Communication,” 2.

³⁹ Skills You Need, *An Introduction to Communication Skills*, 15.

⁴⁰ Skills You Need, *An Introduction to Communication Skills*, 16.

⁴¹ Skills You Need, *An Introduction to Communication Skills*, 62.

Listening is the key to interpersonal communication. A person who listens well to what the speaker is saying can communicate well; however, a person who does not listen to what the speaker is saying and only talks about what he or she has to say communicates poorly. To listen well, you need to know the language of the speaker and know the voice of the speaker. You also need to know the meaning of the speaker's words so there are no misunderstandings. Only then can you respond correctly.

Listening requires focus. Listening means “paying attention not only to the story, but how it is told, the use of language and voice, and how the other person uses his or her body.”⁴² In an interpersonal communication we spend a lot of time listening. Research shows that “adults spend an average of 70% of their time engaged in some sort of communication.”⁴³ Of the 70% of the time, “an average of 45% is spent listening compared to 30% speaking, 16% reading and 9% writing.”⁴⁴

Understanding listening is even more important than understanding speaking. There are two general listening types: Discriminative Listening and Comprehensive Listening. Discriminative listening is “first developed at a very early age—perhaps even before birth, in the womb.”⁴⁵

Discriminative listening is “the most basic form of listening and does not involve understanding the meaning of the words or phrases but merely the different sounds that are produced.”⁴⁶ Discriminative listening gives us the ability to discriminate between

⁴² Skills You Need, *An Introduction to Communication Skills*, 64.

⁴³ Skills You Need, *An Introduction to Communication Skills*, 65.

⁴⁴ Skills You Need, *An Introduction to Communication Skills*, 65.

⁴⁵ Skills You Need, *An Introduction to Communication Skills*, 73.

⁴⁶ Skills You Need, *An Introduction to Communication Skills*, 73.

sounds or voices. When children are young, through discriminative listening, they learn that the mother's voice and the father's voice are different. They also go further and learn that the voices of their parents and the voices of other people are different. Discriminative listening develops through childhood and into adulthood. As a person grows up and develops discriminative listening, he or she is able to distinguish between the mother tongue and foreign languages and between the dialects of regions. Furthermore, through a person's voice, you can distinguish whether that person is happy, sad, angry, et cetera.⁴⁷

Comprehensive listening goes beyond being able to distinguish sounds or voices, it involves “understanding the message or messages that are being communicated.”⁴⁸ In order to understand the message through comprehensive listening, “the listener first needs appropriate vocabulary and language skills.”⁴⁹ Comprehensive listening is challenged and complicated when complicated language or technical jargon is overly used. As comprehensive listening develops, we become more aware of the meaning of the message the other person is trying to convey and reduce confusion or misunderstanding.

There are three specific listening modes in interpersonal relationships: Informational Listening, Critical Listening and Therapeutic or Empathetic Listening.⁵⁰ Discriminative listening and comprehensive listening are prerequisites for these specific listening modes. Each of these modes has a purpose.

⁴⁷ Skills You Need, *An Introduction to Communication Skills*, 73.

⁴⁸ Skills You Need, *An Introduction to Communication Skills*, 74.

⁴⁹ Skills You Need, *An Introduction to Communication Skills*, 74.

⁵⁰ Skills You Need, *An Introduction to Communication Skills*, 75.

Informational listening is listening with the purpose of learning. That is why “whenever you listen to learn something, you are engaged in informational listening.”⁵¹ Critical listening is listening with the purpose of evaluating and analyzing something. Critical listening is a much more active behavior than informational listening and “usually involves some sort of problem-solving or decision-making.”⁵²

Therapeutic or empathic listening is listening with the purpose of understanding the speaker's feelings and emotions. For this reason, therapeutic or empathic listening involves attempting to put the listener into the speaker's shoes and sharing their thoughts. Empathy is different from sympathy. Sympathy involves being compassionate or feeling sorry for someone else. Empathy involves “a deeper connection, a realization and understanding of another person's point of view.”⁵³ For this reason, counselors or therapists use therapeutic or empathic listening to understand and ultimately help their clients.⁵⁴ Therapeutic or empathic listening, like critical listening, is not meant to make decisions or offer advice to the speaker, but instead “gently encourages the speaker to explain and elaborate on their feelings and emotions.”⁵⁵

Communication in the Bible

What does the Bible say about communication? Three important events related to communication are examined. The first event is the creation of the heavens and earth

⁵¹ Skills You Need, *An Introduction to Communication Skills*, 75.

⁵² Skills You Need, *An Introduction to Communication Skills*, 75.

⁵³ Skills You Need, *An Introduction to Communication Skills*, 76.

⁵⁴ Skills You Need, *An Introduction to Communication Skills*, 76.

⁵⁵ Skills You Need, *An Introduction to Communication Skills*, 76.

recorded in Genesis 1. The second event is the Tower of Babel recorded in Genesis 11.

The third event is the Word becoming flesh recorded in John 1.

First, when God created the heavens and the earth, He created with words: “And God said, ‘Let there be ...’” (Gen. 1:3, 6, 9, 11, 14, 20, 24). This means God created the heavens and the earth through communication. In Genesis 1:2 it says: “And the earth was a formless and desolate emptiness....” In the beginning, the world was chaos and emptiness. In the world of chaos and emptiness, God made order and fullness through verbal communication, the Word.

The second event, the Tower of Babel, is recorded in Genesis 11. Genesis 11:1 says: “Now all the earth used the same language and the same words.” Since there was one language throughout the land, the main communication method was “spoken words”. God gave one language so that people all over the world can communicate freely. In that one language, people could also communicate with God.

But the people united and revolted against God. They built a huge tower; they wanted to build a tower high enough to reach the sky. They wanted to become like God. Genesis 11:4 says: “And they said, “Come, let’s build ourselves a city, and a tower whose top will reach into heaven, and let’s make a name for ourselves; otherwise, we will be scattered abroad over the face of all the earth.” God was angry at the evil intentions of the people. God responded,

Behold, they are one people, and they all have the same language. And this is what they have started to do, and now nothing which they plan to do will be impossible for them. Come, let Us go down and there confuse their language, so that they will not understand one another’s speech.” So the Lord scattered them abroad from there over the face of all the earth; and they stopped building the city. (Gen. 11:6-8)

God had confounded language, the main means of communication. When language, the primary communication system that people had, became confused, communication stopped.

We learn how important communication is to God through this event. We also see how important a verbal communication system is in world civilization and history. It is God who created language, a verbal communication system. And God made them seek Him in their own language. Baesler claims that “prayer is evident in every culture with a recorded history.”⁵⁶ According to Baesler, “some of the first recorded petitionary prayers are etched on cuneiform tablets by pre-Egyptian Sumerians” around 3,000 B.C.E. “Since the time of Sumer, our conceptual understanding of prayer evolved into a multitude of forms and functions described in the sacred text of world religions,” such as the Bible, Qur’an, Tanakh, and the Vedas.⁵⁷

The third communication event is the Word becoming flesh recorded in John 1. John 1:1 says: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” And then in verse 14 it says: “And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us; and we saw His glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.” The Word spoken here refers to God the Son, who is the second person of the triune God. Jesus is the Son of God who came to this earth in the flesh. Here, “Word” is “Logos (λόγος)” in the original Greek. The meaning of logos is, first, “a word, uttered by a living voice, embodying a conception or idea,” second, “what someone has said,” and

⁵⁶ Baesler, “An Introduction to Prayer Research in Communication,” 1.

⁵⁷ Baesler, “An Introduction to Prayer Research in Communication,” 1.

third, “the act of speaking.”⁵⁸ We can see here how important verbal communication is to God to the extent that God Himself is Word.

Jeremiah 33:3 says. “Call to Me and I will answer you, and I will tell you great and mighty things, which you do not know.” God gave people a system to communicate with God. That is prayer. It means that God hears and answers when we humans pray using verbal communication called language. We speak to God, and God hears and answers. This is the communication system God has given us.

In John 14:13-14, Jesus says: “And whatever you ask in My name, this I will do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask Me anything in My name, I will do it.” Jesus, the Word who became flesh, promised that when we pray in the name of Jesus, He will hear and answer whatever we pray.

Conclusion

As mentioned in the introduction, “prayer is generally defined as a spiritual communication with God.”⁵⁹ Intercession is a spiritual two-way interpersonal communication, especially between God and human. The word intercession is made up of two words put together. The word “inter” means “between,” and the word “cession” comes from “cede,” which means “to go.”⁶⁰ So, intercession means going between.⁶¹ An intercessor is one who goes between. An intercessor goes back and forth between what?

⁵⁸ Studylight.org, accessed January 5, 2023, <https://www.studylight.org/lexicons/eng/greek/3056.html>.

⁵⁹ Baesler, “An Introduction to Prayer Research in Communication,” 2.

⁶⁰ Elijah Kim, *Heavenly Throne Intercession* (Seoul, Korea: Kyujang, 2012), 62.

⁶¹ Kim, *Heavenly Throne Intercession*, 62.

A prayer intercessor is to go back and forth between God and another including people, peoples, countries, and churches.

An intercessor is not a person who prays for himself or herself, but a person who prays for others, for the nation, for the country, and for the church. An intercessor is to hear the prayer topics of another person, nation, country, or church, take those prayer topics, go to God on their behalf, and then receive God's answers and return to them and deliver them. For this reason, an intercessor must know how to listen well to other people's prayer topics and convey them to God. They must also know how to listen to God's answers well and convey them well to others. Communication is important in intercessory prayer.

In his research paper, "Interpersonal Christian Prayer and Communication," Baesler compared and contrasted a particular type of prayer, "Interpersonal Christian Prayer (ICP)," with a particular type of communication context, "Interpersonal Communication (IC)."⁶² Baesler proposed a working definition of "Interpersonal Christian Prayer" in the context of a covenant relationship between the Christian and the Holy Trinity as follows:

Interpersonal Christian Prayer is the Christian's affirmative response to God's invitation of love as demonstrated by a conscious focus of the Christian's attention on the presence of God followed by one or more verbal and/or nonverbal communication processes directed to/with God: talking, listening, dialoging, meditating, and contemplating which can culminate in the experience of mystical union, and these processes potentially increase cognitive thoughts and observable behaviors related to positive Christian virtues and decrease thoughts and behaviors related to sin.⁶³

⁶² Baesler, "Interpersonal Christian Prayer and Communication," 8.

⁶³ Baesler, "Interpersonal Christian Prayer and Communication," 9.

Baesler also found out that there are several similarities and differences between “Interpersonal Christian Prayer” and “Interpersonal Communication.” The most obvious difference between the ICP and the IC is who the relational being is. He says that “in ICP the Christian’s relational partner is a Divine Being whereas for IC the relational partner is another human being.”⁶⁴ Baesler says that “the most striking similarity between ICP and IC is the direct role of communication in both processes such as talking, listening, and dialoging.”⁶⁵

Examining interpersonal communication is very helpful in understanding prayer as a spiritual communication with God. Just as listening is more important than speaking in interpersonal communication, it is more important to hear God's voice than to speak in interpersonal Christian Prayer. In order to pray more effectively we need to know the heart of God and listen to His voice. When praying for the world churches and missionaries, if we realize God's heart toward the nations, world churches and missionaries and know God's will, our intercessory prayer will be more effective. Moving the KEMC-MN participants towards effective intercessory prayer will include them learning to know the heart of God and to listen to His voice.

⁶⁴ Baesler, “Interpersonal Christian Prayer and Communication,” 9.

⁶⁵ Baesler, “Interpersonal Christian Prayer and Communication,” 9.

CHAPTER SIX

PROJECT ANALYSIS

Introduction

The decline in membership since the coronavirus pandemic has brought a crisis to churches. Small churches have disappeared; those that remain have an unpredictable future existence. In the *2024 Korean Church Trend Survey*, senior pastors were asked if they had ever thought about whether their church would be able to survive in the future due to a decline in membership. The results showed that 62.8% said they had thought about it.¹ Thus, a large majority of pastors had concerns about the future of their church.

The hypothesis of this DMin project was that if members of the context immigrant church participate in a six-week intercessory prayer training, then their focus on local difficulties will be changed to a focus on their role as a praying church in the global faith community and their anxiety about their church's future existence will be decreased. The purpose of this project was to test this hypothesis in the Korean Evangelical Methodist Church of Minnesota (KEMC-MN). The goal of this project was to reduce the anxiety that the members of the KEMC-MN have about the future existence of their church by using intercessory prayer training to shift their focus from local challenges to the role of the church in the global church.

¹ MHDData, *Korean Church Trend 2024* (Seoul, South Korea: Kyujang Book, 2023), 30.

This DMin project consisted of six sessions that met weekly for six weeks. During these six weeks, there were nine lessons. The lessons were based on the four foundational chapters of the thesis: “Biblical,” “Historical,” “Theological,” and “Interdisciplinary.”

The first week’s lesson topic was “Understanding the Church,” which was based on the project’s biblical foundation text, Mark 11:15-17. In this passage, Jesus says, “My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations.” In this passage, Jesus is talking about what the church is and what the church is supposed to do. With this biblical foundation, participants will have a correct biblical concept of what God intended the church to look like and the role God intended for the church.

The second session featured a lecture on the “Moravian Intercessory Prayer Movement,” the historical foundation of the project, and a lecture on an “Overview of Prayer.” The Moravian Christians had an intercessory prayer movement that lasted for one hundred years. Surprisingly, it was not just a regular prayer movement, but an intercessory prayer movement for world missions. Moravian Christians had fled persecution in Moravia and became asylum seekers in a community called Herrnhut, provided by Count Zinzendorf. They formed a community of faith amidst many local challenges. They overcame these local challenges by focusing on the Kingdom of God through intercession for world missions and missionaries. Likewise, this DMin project was intended to shift the focus of KEMC-MN members from focusing on local challenges to focusing on the church’s role in the global community of faith through intercession for the nations, world churches, and missionaries. Through an “Overview of Prayer,” participants received a general knowledge and understanding of prayer by learning the definition of prayer, the origins of prayer, the principles of prayer, the

purpose of prayer, the nine types of prayer recorded in the Bible, and the five postures of prayer recorded in the Bible.

The third session included two lessons with lectures on “What is the Church?”, the theological foundation of the project, and on an “Overview of Intercessory Prayer.” Examples of intercession from the Old and New Testaments were presented. The theological foundation underpinning this DMin project focuses on ecclesiology. Ecclesiology is the theological description of the church. The Bible, the United Methodist Church, the Christian tradition, classical theologians, and contemporary theologians all have a common definition of the church: it is not a building, but a gathering of believers and a community of faith. Ecclesiology also points to Jesus as the head of the church. I believe that when the members of KEMC-MN have this correct ecclesiology and are faithful to the church’s primary role of interceding for the nations, world churches and missionaries around the world, there will be less anxiety about the future of the church. Through the lecture “Overview of Intercessory Prayer,” participants received knowledge and understanding of intercession by learning the definition of intercession, the difference between prayer and intercession, the origins of intercession, representative examples of intercession recorded in the Old and New Testaments, examples of Old Testament intercessors, and the intercession of our supreme intercessor, Jesus Christ.

The lesson topics for weeks four and five were “Interpersonal Communication,” the interdisciplinary foundation, and “Hearing God’s Voice,” based on Mark and Patti Virkler’s *Four Keys to Hearing God’s Voice*.² In communication studies, intercession is

² Mark Virkler and Patti Virkler, *Four Keys to Hearing God’s Voice* (Shippensburg, PA: Destiny Image Publishers, Inc., 2010).

defined as spiritual two-way communication with God. Understanding how interpersonal communication occurs between people is an important foundation for understanding spiritual two-way communication with God. These two sessions equipped participants with sufficient knowledge and understanding of interpersonal communication. Listening is the key to interpersonal communication. People who listen well to the person who is speaking can communicate well. Just as listening is more important than talking in interpersonal communication, it is more important to listen to God's voice than to talk in interpersonal prayer. The project culminated in week six with a lecture on the intercessory meeting model and participants practicing the model.

In this chapter, I will discuss the project's methodology, implementation, a summary of learning outcomes, and provide an overview of the project's success. Over the course of the six-week intercessory prayer training, I saw that the participants' view of the church changed from a local to a global perspective as they gained a better understanding of the church's role in the global church, a better understanding of the church's values, and a shift in their view of the church from a local to a global perspective as they practiced intercessory prayer for the nations, the world churches, and missionaries. Finally, I affirm that over the course of the six-week project, participants were able to shift their attention from local issues to the global nature of the church and reduce the anxiety they had about the future of KEMC-MN.

Methodology

General Methodology

I utilized the qualitative research method for the project. The qualitative research method was implemented through pre- and post-project surveys, group discussions, and in-depth personal interviews after the six-week project. I chose a six-week intercessory prayer training as an approach to gather the data. The training included lectures on understanding the church, on what the church is, on prayer and intercessory prayer, on the Moravian intercessory prayer movement, on interpersonal communication, and on how to listen to God's voice.

At each weekly session, there was a lecture for forty minutes or two lectures for one hour and then thirty minutes of group discussion time on the lesson(s). At the end of each session, I intentionally included practice time of interceding for nations, world churches, and missionaries. The reason for intercessory prayer at the end of each session was because I believe that prayer is best learned by actually praying. At the beginning, most of the participants had difficulty in intercessory prayer because they did not have practical experience with intercession. Because of this, the intercessory prayer time in the first session was only ten minutes with a gradual increase in time over the sessions to twenty minutes at the final session.

Various components were used to collect the data, test the hypothesis, and evaluate the results for this project. Before the first session I collected the participant's general questionnaire on prayer life and pre-project questionnaires. Following the project, I collected post-project questionnaires and conducted personal interviews. I also collected observations from group discussions and participants' non-verbal communication.

Participant's General Questionnaire on Prayer Life

The first data collection tool was a participant general questionnaire of prayer life taken before the project sessions. The participants' general questionnaire on prayer life was intended to assess the participant's current state of prayer knowledge, intercessory prayer knowledge and prayer life. This data helped me design the lectures on prayer and intercessory prayer.

Pre- and Post-Project Survey Questionnaires

The second data collection tool was pre- and post-project survey questionnaires. The pre-project questionnaire was identical to the post-project questionnaire. I assessed whether or not there had been a change in knowledge, understanding, attitude, or perspective through the differences in the way the participants answered these questions at the start and conclusion of the project. The comparisons between the pre- and post-project surveys helped determine if participants had changed their understanding of the church towards a global perspective through intercessory prayer.

Personal Interview Questionnaire

The third data collection tool was personal interviews performed at the conclusion of the project. The questions asked in the personal interview questionnaire were intended to dig deep into the subject matter of the project with the participants. These open-ended questions made the participants think through the subject matter. I used their answers to assess whether my hypothesis was validated in the ministry context.

Group Discussion Notes

The fourth data collection tool was group discussion notes. At the end of each lesson, I would ask the participants, “Is there anything you hadn’t thought about in relation to the content of the lesson that you now realize or think about because of the lesson?” and recorded their responses. This group discussion time allowed me to gauge how well the participants understood the content of the lesson and to evaluate how their thoughts and perspectives changed as the week progressed.

Means for Collecting Data

I collected data and recorded the virtual sessions through ZOOM Meetings. I gathered the group discussion contents and the participants’ expressions and non-verbal communication through video recordings and observation notes. The participants used the anonymous Google form with a self-assigned four-digit number for the participant’s general questionnaire on prayer life and pre- and post-project survey questionnaires. Each participant knew what four-digit number he or she used on the form and by doing so remained anonymous.

Implementations*Initial Preparatory Activities*

Two rounds of advertisements were conducted to recruit participants for the project. The advertisements to recruit participants were targeted to the adult members of the KEMC-MN. The first round of recruitment was emailed to ten church council

members and staff/pastor-parish relations committee members on August 14. The church leaders were sent a copy of the project's curriculum so they would know what to expect. The second round of recruitment was sent to thirty church members through the church Sunday bulletin on September 3. Since all of the church members are Korean, I translated the English materials into Korean. Through the two rounds of recruitment, a total of seven people expressed interest in participating in the project.

Before the project began, I sent three emails to the seven participants. In the first email I thanked them for participating in the project, attached an "Informed Consent Form," and asked that all participants sign and return it to me by September 12, the day before the project was scheduled to begin. I attached the project's curriculum to give them an idea of what they would be working on. The email also included a description of the two surveys they would soon receive regarding the project.

The second email was the "participant's general questionnaire on prayer life" Google form. The third email was the "pre-project survey questionnaire" Google form. I asked the participants to use a 4-digit number of their choosing as their participant number in the two Google form surveys. I explained that this was to protect their privacy. I asked the seven participants what day of the week and what time they would like to meet for the project, and they all said Wednesday evenings at 8:00 p.m. central time. I also sent an email to all participants about the project's schedule and how to meet. I told them that the project would meet every Wednesday for six weeks, starting with the first session on Wednesday, September 13. Each week, I emailed a link to the Zoom meeting to all participants before the session started, and again the day before as a reminder. For the second session, I asked for permission to meet on Tuesday, September 19, instead of

Wednesday, September 20, due to a scheduling conflict, and everyone agreed. I informed them that the project sessions would be held via Zoom meeting from the first to the fifth session, and the sixth session would be held in person in the church sanctuary.

Curricula for the Project

We kicked off our first session on Wednesday, September 13 at 8:00 p.m. central time. The first session (see table 1) started with me praying for the group. After the opening prayer, I explained that I would be recording the meeting and asked for their consent. I explained that the reason for recording each session was to record the content of the group discussion and to get the data later. All participants agreed to be recorded. My original plan was to give the participants time to complete the pre-project surveys: the participant's general questionnaire on prayer life and the pre-project questionnaire. Fortunately, everyone had already completed and returned them, so I took that time out and thanked everyone for completing the surveys. I introduced myself to all of the participants and explained the curriculum for the entire project and what would be covered in each session.

The first session's lesson was to understand the church based on Mark 11:15-17, the biblical foundation of the project. In Mark 11:15-17, Jesus refers to the church as "my house" and says, "My house is the house of prayer for all nations." The owner of the church is Jesus, and Jesus, the owner of the church, says that the church's job is to pray for all nations. The lecture on what the church was aimed to increase the participants' biblical understanding of the church. After the lecture, all the participants had a group discussion about the content of the lecture.

After the group discussion time, we took an announcement break to select a person to do an opening prayer for the next session. I mentioned that I would email the lesson notes after each week's session. During the intercession time for the nations, the world church, and missionaries, we used the "Today's Prayer" from the GAP Movement to intercede for the churches and missions in Libya, where devastating floods had killed more than 11,000 people.³

Table 1. Session 1: Biblical Foundation: Understand the Church

Lesson	Time	Instructor
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcome, Introduction and Opening Prayer 	20 minutes	Rev. Leo Park
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction of Curriculum 	10 minutes	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Biblical Foundation: Understanding the Church 	40 minutes	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group Discussion on the Lesson 	30 minutes	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Announcements 	5 minutes	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interceding for Nations, World Churches and Missionaries 	10 minutes	

The second session was held on Tuesday, September 19, at 8:00 p.m. central time. After my welcome, the second session (see table 2) began with a prayer from one of the participants. I introduced the content of the two lectures that would be covered in the second session.

The first lecture was about the Moravian community and its intercessory prayer movement, which served as the historical foundation for the project. Fleeing persecution in Moravia and exiled to land provided by Count Zinzendorf, the Moravian Christians

³ "[Today's prayer] Libya Avoiding the Flood, ... "The Road to Finding Drinking Water is a Minefield," GAP Movement, accessed September 13, 2023, <https://www.gapprayer.net/en/post/today-s-prayer-libya-avoiding-the-flood-the-road-to-finding-drinking-water-is-a-minefield>.

formed a community of faith in the face of many challenges. Instead of focusing on local difficulties, they focused on the kingdom of God through intercession. The result was a remarkable global mission. The second lecture provided an overview of prayer, including the definition of prayer, the origins of prayer, the principles of prayer, and the purpose of prayer. It also introduced the nine types of prayer recorded in the Bible and the five prayer postures.

After each of the two lessons, participants had a group discussion about the content of the lessons. After the second group discussion, there was an announcement break, and I selected a person to do an opening prayer for the following week's session. Using the "Today's Prayer" from GAP Movement to intercede for the nations, the global church, and missionaries, participants interceded for Yemen, the church and missionaries in Yemen, where heavy rains have left more than 900 people in refugee camps without shelter.⁴

⁴ "[Today's Prayer] Flooding in Yemen...Over 900 Refugees Displaced - IOM," GAP Movement, accessed September 19, 2023., <https://www.gapprayer.net/en/post/today-s-prayer-flooding-in-yemen-over-900-refugees-displaced-iom>.

Table 2. Session 2: Historical Foundation: Moravian Community and Its Intercessory Prayer Movement and Overview of Prayer

Lesson	Time	Instructor
• Welcome and Opening Prayer	5 minutes	
• Historical Foundation: Moravian Community and Its Intercessory Prayer Movement	30 minutes	Rev. Leo Park
• Group Discussion on the Lesson	30 minutes	Rev. Leo Park
• Overview of Prayer: What is Prayer, Nine Types of Prayer and Five Prayer Postures	20 minutes	
• Group Discussion on the Lesson	20 minutes	
• Announcement	5 minutes	
• Interceding for Nations, World Churches and Missionaries	10 minutes	

We had our third session on Wednesday, September 27 at 8:00 p.m. central time.

After a welcome from me, the third session (see table 3) began with a prayer from the participant selected from the previous week's session. I introduced the content of the two lessons that would be covered in the third session.

The first lesson was on ecclesiology, the theological foundation of this project. This lesson introduced what the Bible calls the church, how The United Methodist Church defines the church, how the Christian tradition defines the church, and how classical and contemporary theologians define the church. The second lesson was on an overview of intercession. This lesson explained what intercession is, the difference between prayer and intercession, and the origins of intercession. The lecture included examples of intercession recorded in the Old and New Testaments, examples of intercessors in the Old Testament, and the intercession of Jesus Christ, our supreme intercessor.

After each lesson, participants had a group discussion about the content of the lessons. After the second group discussion, there was a time for announcements, and I selected a person to do an opening prayer for the following week's session. Participants used the "Today's Prayer" from GAP Movement to intercede for the nations, the global church, and missionaries. Participants interceded for Lebanon, the church and missionaries in Lebanon, which was in economic crisis due to a seven-month decline in the Purchasing Managers' Index.⁵

Table 3. Session 3: Theological Foundation: What is Church and Overview of Intercessory Prayer

Lesson	Time	Instructor
• Welcome and Opening Prayer	5 minutes	
• Theological Foundation: What is Church?	30 minutes	Rev. Leo Park
• Group Discussion	20 minutes	Rev. Leo Park
• Overview of Intercessory Prayer: Old and New Testament Intercessory Prayer and Intercessory Prayer of Jesus	30 minutes	
• Group Discussion on the Lesson	20 minutes	
• Announcements	5 minutes	
• Interceding for Nations, World Churches and Missionaries	15 minutes	

We had our fourth session on Wednesday, October 4 at 8:00 p.m. central time.

After a welcome from me, the fourth session (see table 4) began with a prayer from the

⁵ “[선교지소식] 경제위기 레바논의 구매관리자지수(PMI) 7개월째 하락,” [[Mission News] Lebanon's Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) Falls for 7th Month in Economic Crisis], GAP Movement, accessed September 27, 2023, <https://www.gapprayer.net/post/%EC%84%A0%EA%B5%90%EC%A7%80-%EC%86%8C%EC%8B%9D-%EA%B2%BD%EC%A0%9C%EC%9C%84%EA%B8%B0-%EB%A0%88%EB%B0%94%EB%85%BC%EC%9D%98-%EA%B5%AC%EB%A7%A4%EA%B4%80%EB%A6%AC%EC%9E%90%EC%A7%80%EC%88%98-pmi-7%EA%B0%9C%EC%9B%94%EC%A7%B8-%ED%95%98%EB%9D%BD>.

participant selected from the previous week's session. I gave an introduction to the course content to be covered in the fourth session. My original plan was to teach the interpersonal communication lesson and the hearing the voice of God lesson combined over the two weeks of the fourth and fifth sessions. However, after the first three sessions, I decided that it would be better to focus on one lesson per week rather than two lessons divided over two weeks. Therefore, I decided to teach the interpersonal communication lesson in the fourth week and the hearing the voice of God lesson in the fifth week.

The lecture for this fourth session was on interpersonal communication, the interdisciplinary foundation of the project. Communication studies defines prayer as “spiritual communication with God in general,”⁶ so communication skills are very important for people who pray. In this lecture, we looked at the definition of communication, the process of communication, interpersonal communication, listening, and communication in the Bible.

After the lecture, all participants engaged in a group discussion about the content of the lecture. After the group discussion, an announcement break was taken to select an opening prayer person for the next session. During the intercessory prayer for the nations, the global church, and missionaries, we used the “Today's Prayer” from the GAP Movement to intercede for the churches and missions in Syria and Lebanon, which are experiencing mass exodus due to pandemics and economic hardship.⁷

⁶ E. James Baesler, “An Introduction to Prayer Research in Communication: Functions, Contexts, and Possibilities,” *Communication and Theatre Arts Faculty Publications* (2012), https://digitalcommons.odu.edu/communication_fac_pubs/10, 2.

⁷ “[오늘의 기도] 시리아.레바논 기독교인 대규모 탈출... 전염병과 경제난 등 이유,” [[Today's Prayer] Mass exodus of Christians from Syria and Lebanon...pandemic, economic hardship, etc.],

Table 4. Session 4: Interdisciplinary Foundation: Definition and Process of Interpersonal Communication

Lesson	Time	Instructor
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcome and Opening Prayer 	5 minutes	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interdisciplinary Foundation: Definition and Process of Interpersonal Communication Group Discussion on the Lesson Announcements 	40 minutes 30 minutes 5 minutes	Rev. Leo Park
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interceding for Nations, World Churches and Missionaries 	15 minutes	

We had our fifth session on Wednesday, October 11, at 8:00 p.m. central time.

After a welcome from me, the fifth session (see table 5) began with a prayer from the selected participant from the previous week's session. I then gave an introduction to the material that would be covered in the fifth session.

The lesson for this fifth session was about hearing God's voice using the book *Four Keys to Hearing God's Voice*⁸ by Mark and Patti Virkler. The lesson focused on the four keys presented in the book: "Recognize God's Voice as Spontaneous Thoughts," "Become Still," "Look for Vision as You Pray," and "Two-way Journaling." The fifth lesson was designed to help participants learn the art of listening to the voice of Jesus Christ, our supreme intercessor, and improve their ability to realize the heart of Jesus Christ for the global church and missionaries.

GAP Movement, accessed October 4, 2023,

<https://www.gapprayer.net/post/%EC%98%A4%EB%8A%98%EC%9D%98-%EA%B8%B0%EB%8F%84-%EC%8B%9C%EB%A6%AC%EC%95%84-%EB%A0%88%EB%B0%94%EB%85%BC-%EA%B8%B0%EB%8F%85%EA%B5%90%EC%9D%B8-%EB%8C%80%EA%B7%9C%EB%AA%A8-%ED%83%88%EC%B6%9C-%EC%A0%84%EC%97%BC%EB%B3%91%EA%B3%BC-%EA%B2%BD%EC%A0%9C%EB%82%9C-%EB%93%B1-%EC%9D%B4%EC%9C%A0>.

⁸ Mark Virkler and Patti Virkler, *Four Keys to Hearing God's Voice* (Shippensburg, PA: Destiny Image Publishers, Inc., 2010).

After the lecture, all the participants had a group discussion about the content of the lecture. After the group discussion, there was an announcement time, and it was announced that the sixth session would be a face-to-face intercessory prayer meeting in the church sanctuary. During the intercessory prayer time for the nations, the world church, and missionaries, we used the “Today’s Prayer” from GAP Movement to share about the war between Hamas and Israel and prayed for Israel and Palestine, the churches, and missions there.⁹

Table 5. Session 5: *Four Keys to Hearing God’s Voice* by Mark and Patti Virkler

Lesson	Time	Instructor
• Welcome and Opening Prayer	5 minutes	
• <i>Four Keys to Hearing God’s Voice</i> by Mark and Patti Virkler	30 minutes	Rev. Leo Park
• Group Discussion on the Lesson	30 minutes	
• Announcements	10 minutes	
• Interceding for Nations, World Churches and Missionaries	15 minutes	

The sixth session was held on Wednesday, October 18, at 7:00 p.m. central time.

The sixth session (see table 6) was not a Zoom meeting, but a face-to-face intercessory prayer meeting with all participants in the church sanctuary. After a welcome by a

⁹ “[오늘의 기도] 하마스 “민가 공격 때마다 인질 처형” 이스라엘 “하마스시신 1500 구 발견,” [Today’s Prayer] Hamas “executing hostages every time a civilian house is attacked” Israel “found 1500 Hamas bodies], GAP Movement, accessed October 11, 2023, <https://www.gapprayer.net/post/%EC%98%A4%EB%8A%98%EC%9D%98-%EA%B8%B0%EB%8F%84-%ED%95%98%EB%A7%88%EC%8A%A4-%EB%AF%BC%EA%B0%80-%EA%B3%B5%EA%B2%A9-%EB%95%8C%EB%A7%88%EB%8B%A4-%EC%9D%B8%EC%A7%88-%EC%B2%98%ED%98%95-%EC%9D%B4%EC%8A%A4%EB%9D%BC%EC%97%98-%ED%95%98%EB%A7%88%EC%8A%A4%EC%8B%9C%EC%8B%A0-1500%EA%B5%AC-%EB%B0%9C%EA%B2%AC>.

context associate, the sixth session began with praise and worship from a context praise team according to the order of the intercessory prayer meeting model.

The sixth session was not a lecture, but a hands-on model of an intercessory prayer meeting and practicing the order of the meeting together. All participants put into practice what they had learned in the previous sessions by following the model intercessory prayer meeting. By actually participating in and interceding in an intercessory prayer meeting, participants would learn how to conduct an intercessory prayer meeting according to the “Intercessory Prayer Meeting Example Sequence.” The order of the meeting was “Intercessory Prayer Meeting Example Sequence” was “Praise and Worship,” “Opening Prayer,” “Message,” “Intercessory Prayer Time,” and ended with “The Lord’s Prayer.”

The original plan was to present a model intercessory prayer meeting, have them fill out the Post-Project Survey Questionnaire, and then have a group discussion. However, after all the participants agreed, I decided to present a model intercessory prayer meeting and then have a group discussion after intercessory prayer for the nations, the world church, and missionaries in that order. After the intercessory prayer meeting, all the participants had dinner and fellowship and freely discussed the intercessory prayer meeting. I decided that the post-project survey questionnaire would be completed and submitted after the project was over.

Table 6. Session 6: Model of Intercessory Prayer

Lesson	Time	Instructor
• Welcome and Opening Prayer	10 minutes	
• Model of Intercessory Prayer: Sample Intercessory Prayer Meeting Order	30 minutes	Rev. Leo Park
• Participate in a Sample Intercessory Prayer Meeting for Nations, World Churches and Missionaries	30 minutes	
• Group Discussion on the Model of Intercessory Prayer Meeting	40 minutes	

Final Preparatory Activities

On the evening of October 18, after all six weeks of the project were completed, I sent an email to all participants thanking them for their participation and congratulating them on completing the project. I told them that they would be receiving two emails in the coming days: the post-project survey questionnaire Google form and a personal interview schedule.

In the first email, I reminded participants that the questions asked in post-project survey are the same questions they answered in the pre-project survey. I asked them to use the same 4-digit participant number they chose in the pre-project survey questionnaire Google form. For the personal interviews, I used a scheduling program called “Need To Meet” to allow individuals to choose their preferred interview date and time. I explained that the personal interview would last about 30 minutes via Zoom meeting. I sent the interview questions in advance of the actual interview to give participants time to think about them.

Summary of Learning

The hypothesis of this DMin project is that if the members of the context immigrant church participate in a six-week intercessory prayer training, then their focus on local difficulties will be changed to a focus on their role as a praying church in the global faith community, and their anxiety about their church's future existence will be decreased. The anticipated result was that through six weeks of intercessory prayer training, the participating church members would increase in their understanding of the role the church plays in the global church, and they would also increase their understanding of the value of their church. As they practiced intercessory prayer for the nations, world churches, and missionaries, their understanding of the church would change from a purely local perspective to that of a global perspective. When they realized through intercessory prayer that Jesus Christ, the Lord of their church, is leading the world churches, their anxiety about the future of their local church caused by the influence of changes in the environment from outside factors would decrease.

Participant's General Survey on Prayer Life Results

The participant's general questionnaire on prayer life included questions to assess participants' knowledge of prayer, knowledge of intercession, and the current state of their prayer life. The data from the participants' general questionnaire about their prayer life helped me design a lesson on prayer and intercession. I asked eight questions to seven participants.

For the first question, "Have you ever been taught how to pray?", six out of seven (85.7%) responded "Yes, I have" and one (14.3%) responded "No, I haven't". The

second question was a follow-up to the first: “If your answer is “Yes,” where have you learned to pray?” Of the six people who said they had learned to pray, five (83.3%) said “From church” and one (16.7%) said “From a family member”.

The third question asked, “Have you ever learned about intercessory prayer?” Three out of seven respondents (42.9%) said “Yes, I have,” and four respondents (57.1%) said “No, I haven’t”. The fourth question was a follow-up to the third question: “If your answer is “Yes” where have you learn intercessory prayer?” Of the three people who said they had learned intercessory prayer, two (66.6%) said “From church” and one (33.4%) said “From a ministry organization”.

The fifth question asked participants about their daily personal prayer life: “How long do you pray on average per day?” Four out of seven respondents (57.1%) answered “10 minutes or less”, one respondent (14.3%) answered “11 - 20 minutes”, and two respondents (28.6%) answered “30 minutes and more”.

The sixth question asked participants about their corporate prayer life. When asked, “Do you attend prayer meetings?” two out of seven (28.6%) answered “Yes” and four (71.4%) answered “No”. The seventh question asked, “If you attend prayer meetings, how often do you attend?” The two participants who said they attend prayer meetings (100%) answered “Two or more times a week”.

The eighth question asked, “What percentage of your prayer time do you allocate to prayer for the world church and missionaries?” Five out of seven (71.4%) responded “10% or less”, one (14.3%) responded “11 - 30%”, and one (14.3%) responded “51 - 70%”.

Participant responses to questions 1 through 4 revealed that most participants (six out of seven) have a basic knowledge of prayer but lack knowledge of intercession (three out of seven). Participant responses to questions 5 through 8 revealed that all seven participants have a daily personal prayer life, but do not generally participate in prayer groups that gather together (only two out of seven reported participating in prayer groups). They also rarely intercede for the nations, the global church, and missionaries in their personal prayer time or in prayer groups (five out of seven said 10% or less).

Group Discussion on Lesson Results

At the end of each lesson, I would ask the participants, “Is there anything that you realized after listening to the lecture that you hadn’t thought about before, or that made you think about this?” I recorded the participants’ responses for evaluation. This section discusses these responses for each of the six lessons that were taught during the first five sessions.

Lesson 1 Group Discussion on Biblical Foundation: Understanding the Church.

One participant said, “I’ve always thought of prayer as just a tool for communication. It’s a new and powerful thing to realize that the church is a house of prayer, and that house of prayer is where God dwells. It’s a new way of looking at prayer because the church is “a house of prayer for all nations,” according to God.

Another participant said, “When I heard about how the temple allowed people from far away to buy animals for sacrifice, which was actually a convenience for those people to offer sacrifices to God, but it became a place for business, I wondered if there are things that happen in our churches that have good intentions but have become

corrupted without our knowledge, and I wondered what those things are. It got me thinking that we need to look at whether or not we're doing things that have good intentions but are actually having the opposite effect of what God's Word says. Are we praying for our own church? Are we just praying for our own church?"

Another participant said, "I have always thought about who is a Jew and who is a Gentile, but after listening to today's lecture, I realized that we, as a Korean-American church, have been living in the church like a Jew, thinking only about our Korean-American members. I realized that we have been living our church life too exclusively. I reflected a lot."

Lesson 2 Group Discussion on Historical Foundation: Moravian Intercessory Prayer Movement. One participant said, "The Moravian community's focus on the kingdom of God and intercession has always struck a chord with me. One of the things that has always challenged me while attending a Korean-American church is whether I am living my faith too selfishly, thinking only about myself or thinking only about my church. Until now, I have been thinking a lot that I am continuing to live my faith centered on myself. Today's lecture reminded me that I need to center my faith around God and focus on the Kingdom of God."

Another participant said, "The lecture broadened my perspective. I realized that we were only looking at the internal problems of the church."

Lesson 2 Group Discussion on Overview of Prayer. One participant said, "I'm a little embarrassed that I've been praying for so long and didn't realize there were so many different types of prayers."

Another participant said, “I was surprised to learn that there are nine types of prayer, and I realized that my prayer life was limited. I felt that I was lacking a lot in prayer, and I was envious of how other believers could do it so well, especially in congregational prayer, but after listening to the lecture today, I realized that although I am lacking in prayer, there is no right or wrong prayer. Prayer is not a matter of language because it is a sacrifice of the heart. I think we keep putting so much attention and focus on language that it becomes too formal. It is good to train to pray for the sake of prayer.”

Lesson 3 Group Discussion on Theological Foundation: What is Church? One participant said, “I knew that a church is a faith community, not a building, but through today’s lecture, the definition of a church was confirmed and theologically defined.”

Another participant said, “As I listened to the lecture, I thought about two things. First, when I thought about what a true church looks like, I think that if the members do it right, the church will look like a church, and I think it is the church’s responsibility to do it right. Second, looking at the appearance of the early church, I thought about what our church should do to become like the early church. It made me think deeply about what kind of church we are biblically and theologically.”

Lesson 4 Group Discussion on Overview of Intercessory Prayer. One participant said, “It was a thought-provoking time. Hearing about Judah’s destruction in Ezekiel because they didn’t have an intercessor was so refreshing and frightening. An intercessor is a calling, and it made me think a lot about this.”

Another participant said, “Our church is so struggling and weak. My heart was very shaken by the thought of where am I going? We didn’t know about intercession, we

just did it. After listening to the lecture, I learned exactly what intercession is and how important intercessors are in the church.”

Lesson 5 Group Discussion on Interdisciplinary Foundation: Interpersonal Communication. One participant said, “It dawned on me that prayer is a conversation with God, and if we don’t have that, our relationship with God is in trouble. I wondered if we might be heading down the path of the Tower of Babel all over again by only having conversations with people and not with God.”

Another participant said, “This was the first time I have heard that when we pray, we need to listen to God’s voice more than we talk. I always knew that prayer is a communication between God and me, but today’s lecture made me realize that it is important to know what God wants to do to me and to us. When I pray, I focus on telling God what I want and not on what God wants. I feel very repentant after listening to this lecture today.”

Lesson 6 Group Discussion on Hearing God’s Voice. One participant said, “I realized that intercession is about knowing God’s heart and hearing His voice; I realized that it is important to know God’s language and voice; I realized what God’s voice and God’s language are; I realized that hearing God’s voice is not difficult; and I was once again convinced that I should live my life as an intercessor.”

Another participant said, “Thank you for such a valuable lesson. I never really thought about the difference between general prayer and intercessory prayer, I guess I always prayed based on me, but through this lecture, I now know exactly what the difference is between general prayer and intercessory prayer. I am so grateful to know

that the average person can hear God's voice and how to practice it. Knowing that God's language is the Bible has made me realize the importance of the Word."

Another participant said, "As I listened to the lecture today, I realized how important it is to listen to God's voice. I thought about when I had ever really heard God's voice. I realized what it takes to be still to hear God's voice. And I don't think I had ever been taught that you have to verify what you hear. I think the problem was that I had my own interpretation because there was no verification process."

Another participant said, "I realized that's only one way to do it. I realized that I had been taking God's voice and will at my convenience. I realized the difference between my voice and God's voice."

Pre- and Post-Project Survey Results and Comparisons

The questions I asked on the pre-project questionnaire are the same questions I asked on the post-project questionnaire. Observing the difference in how the participants answered these questions at the project's start and conclusion, I could assess whether there had been a change in knowledge, understanding, attitude, or perspective. Collecting data from pre- and post-project survey questionnaire helped determine if each participant changed their understanding of a church in a global perspective through intercessory prayer.

I asked participants, "With regard to your understanding of prayer and intercessory prayer, how much do you agree with the following? Please answer in the scale of 1 to 5, 1 being 'Strongly Disagree,' and 5 being 'Strongly Agree.'" I asked eight questions to seven participants.

Question 1. “I feel content or satisfied when I pray for others, world churches, or missionaries.” I asked this question to assess changes in participants’ attitude and/or satisfaction level with interceding for others, the world church, and missionaries before and after the training. On the pre-project survey (see figure 1), two of seven participants (28.6%) said, “Neither Disagree nor Agree,” and five participants (71.4%) said, “Agree.” On the post-project survey (see figure 1), four out of seven participants (57.1%) said, “Agree,” and three participants (42.9%) said, “Strongly Agree.” The post-project survey result showed the change from 71.4% “Agree” to 100% “Agree or Strongly Agree.”

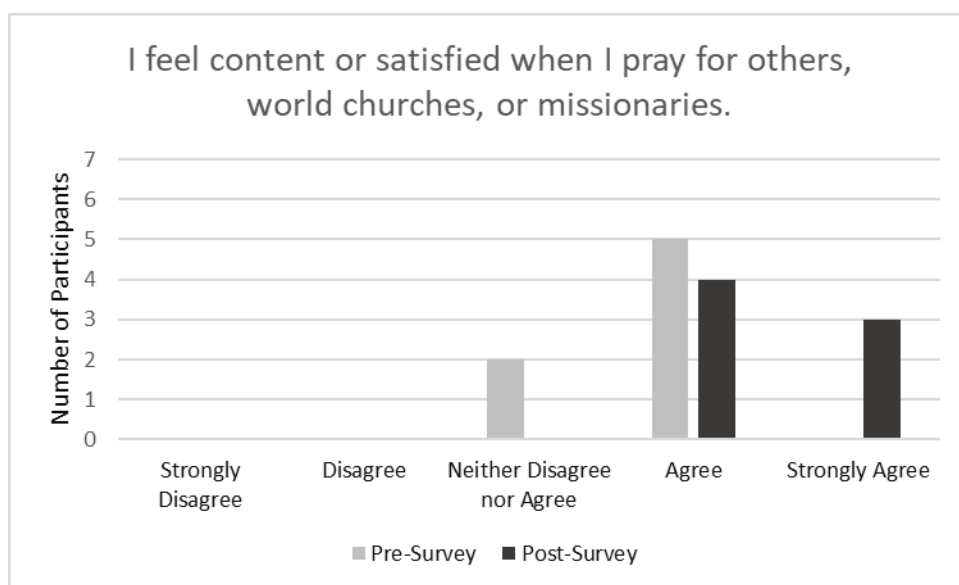


Figure 1. Pre- and post-project survey results of question 1.

Question 2. “I have a clear understanding of the difference between intercessory prayer and other types of prayers.” I asked this question to assess changes in participants’ knowledge and understanding of the difference between general prayer and intercessory prayer before and after the training. On the pre-project survey (see figure 2) three out of seven participants (46.9%) said, “Neither Disagree nor Agree,” and four participants

(57.1%) said, “Agree.” On the post-project survey (see figure 2) one out of seven participants (14.3%) said, “Agree,” and six participants (85.7%) said, “Strongly Agree.” The post-project survey result showed the change from 57.1% “Agree” to 100% “Agree or Strongly Agree.”

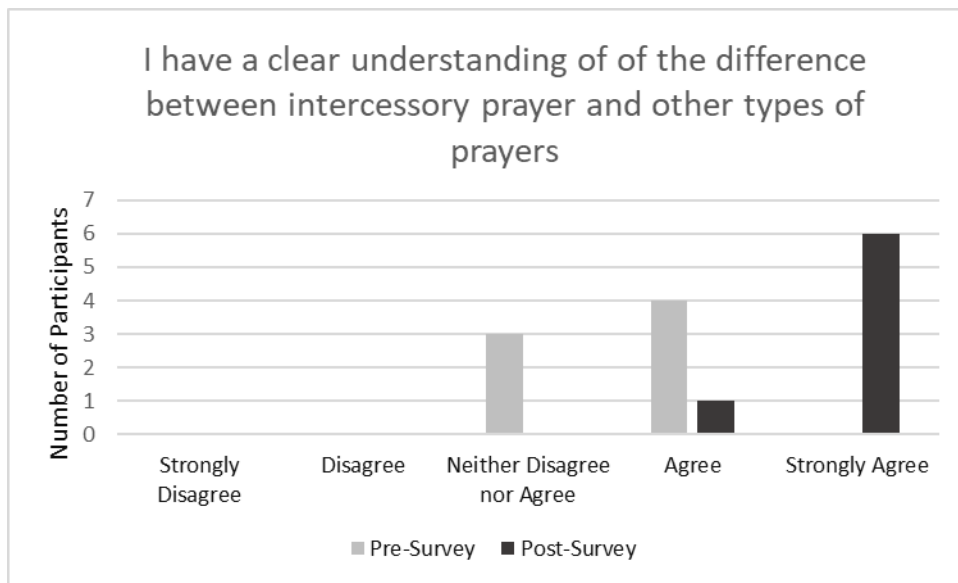


Figure 2. Pre- and post-project survey results of question 2.

Question 3. “I believe that intercessory prayer is important for my spiritual life and for my church.” I ask this question to assess changes in participants’ attitude and understanding about the importance of intercession for the spiritual life and the church before and after the training. On the pre-project survey (see figure 3) five out seven participants (71.4%) said, “Agree,” and two participants (28.6%) said, “Strongly Agree.” On the post-project survey (see figure 3.2) one out of seven participants (14.3%) said, “Agree,” and 6 participants (85.7%) said, “Strongly Agree.” The post-project survey result showed that change from 28.6% “Strongly Agree” to 85.7% “Strongly Agree.”

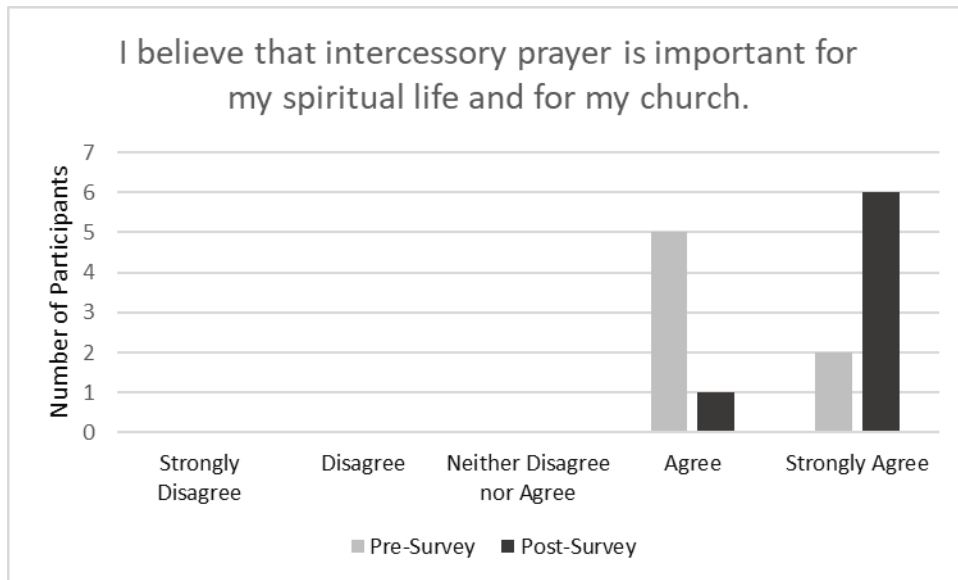


Figure 3. Pre- and post-project survey results of question 3.

Question 4. “I believe I hear God’s voice when I pray.” I asked this question to assess changes in participants’ level of knowledge and understanding about hearing God’s voice in prayer before and after the training. On the pre-project survey (see figure 4), one out of seven participant (14.3%) said “Neither Disagree nor Agree,” five participants (71.4%) said “Agree,” and one participant (14.3%) said “Strongly Agree.” On the post-project survey (see figure 4), one out of seven participants (14.3%) said “Neither Disagree nor Agree,” two participants (28.6%) said “Agree,” and four participants (57.1%) said “Strongly Agree.” The post-project survey results showed the change from 14.3% “Strongly Agree” to 57.1% “Strongly Agree.”

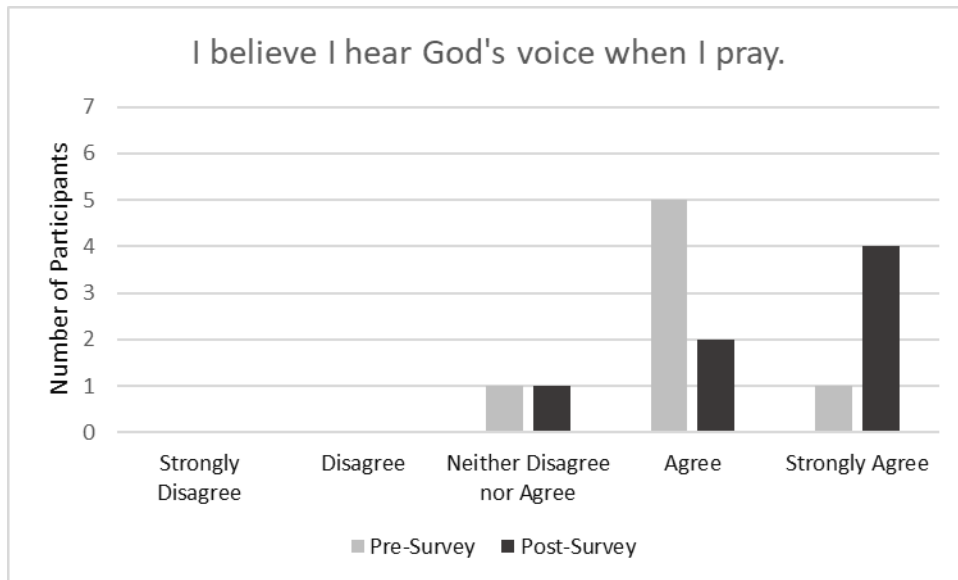


Figure 4. Pre- and post-project survey results of question 4.

Question 5. “I believe that God hears when I pray.” I ask this question to assess changes in participants’ level of knowledge and understanding of how God hears them when they pray before and after the training. On the pre-project survey (see figure 5), five out of seven participants (71.4%) said “Agree,” and two participants (28.6%) said “Strongly Agree.” On the post-project survey (see figure 5), two out of seven participants (28.6%) said “Agree,” and five participants (71.4%) said “Strongly Agree.” The post-project survey result showed the change from 28.6% “Strongly Agree” to 71.4% “Strongly Agree.”

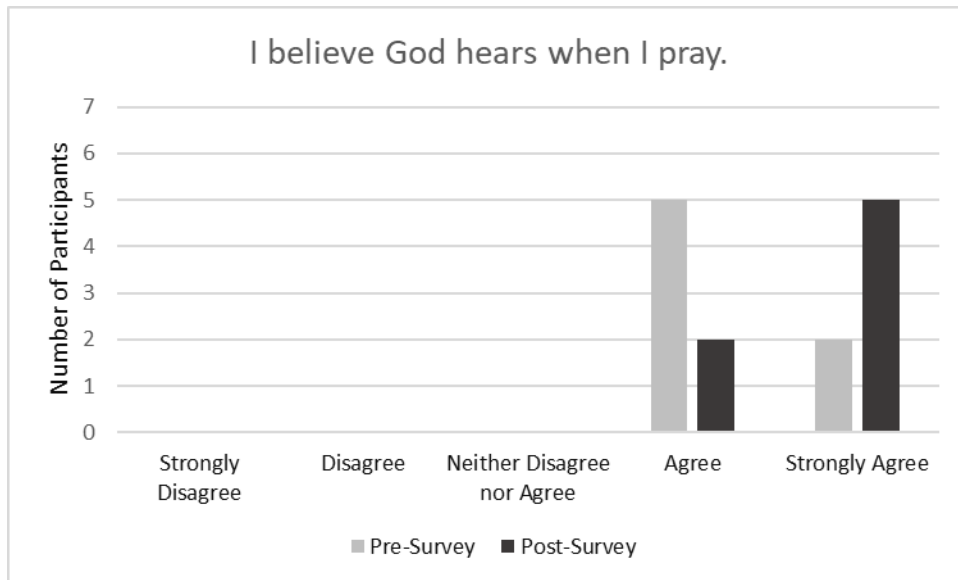


Figure 5. Pre- and post-project survey results of question 5.

Question 6. “I often experience a burden to pray for others, world churches, or missionaries.” I asked this question to assess changes in participants’ attitude of heart to intercede for others, the world church, and missionaries before and after the training. On the pre-project survey (see figure 6), one out of seven participants (14.3%) said “Neither Disagree nor Agree,” and six participants (85.7%) said “Agree.” On the post-project survey (see figure 6), three out of seven participants (42.9%) said “Agree,” and four participants (57.1%) said “Strongly Agree.” The post-project survey result showed the change from 0% “Strongly Agree” to 57.1% “Strongly Agree.”

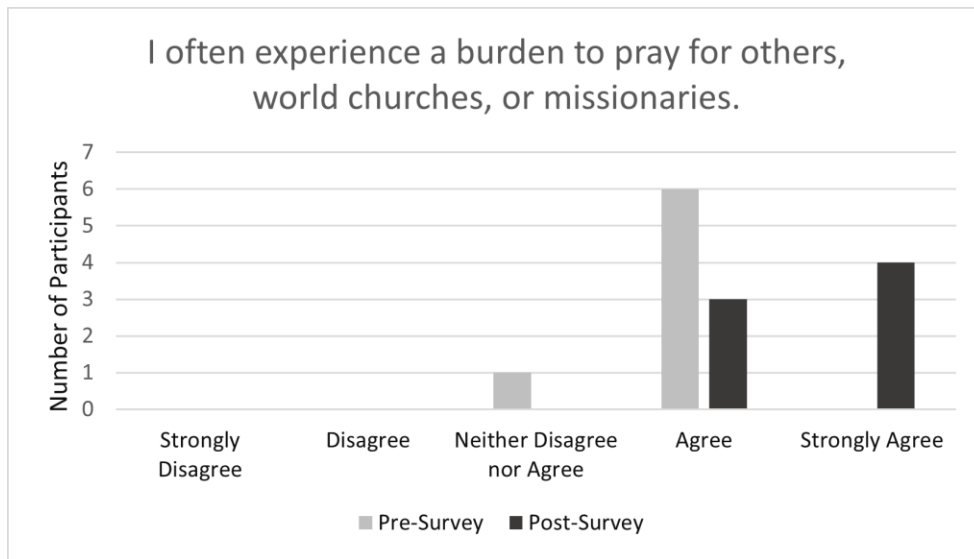


Figure 6. Pre- and post-project survey results of question 6.

Question 7. “I believe that church was not a building but a community of faith.” I asked this question to assess changes in participants’ theological knowledge and understanding of the church as a community of faith before and after the training. On the pre-project survey (see figure 7), five out of seven participants (71.4%) said “Agree,” and two participants (28.6%) said “Strongly Agree.” On the post-project survey (see figure 7), all seven participants (100%) said “Strongly Agree.” The post-project survey result showed the change from 28.6% “Strongly Agree” to 100% “Strongly Agree.”

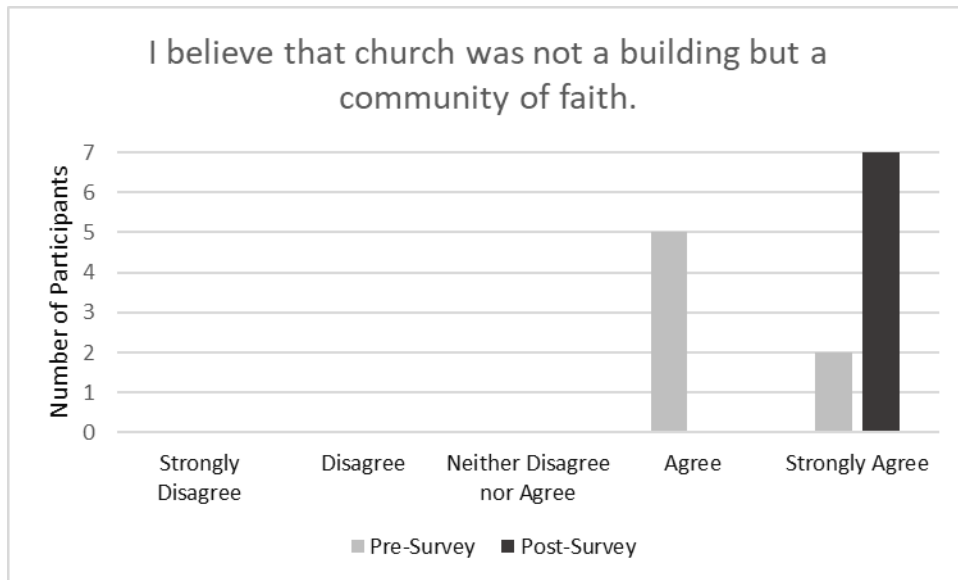


Figure 7. Pre- and post-project survey results of question 7.

Question 8. “I feel that our church was connected with the world churches.” I asked this question to assess changes in participants’ global perspective of a church before and after the training. On the pre-project survey (see figure 8), two out of seven participants (28.6%) said “Disagree,” three participants (42.9%) said “Neither Disagree nor Agree,” and two participants (28.6%) said “Agree.” On the post-project survey (see figure 8), two out of seven participants (28.6%) said “Agree,” and five participants (71.4%) said “Strongly Agree.” The post-project survey result showed the change from 28.6% “Agree” to 100% “Agree or Strongly Agree,” and from 0% “Strongly Agree” to 71.4% “Strongly Agree.”

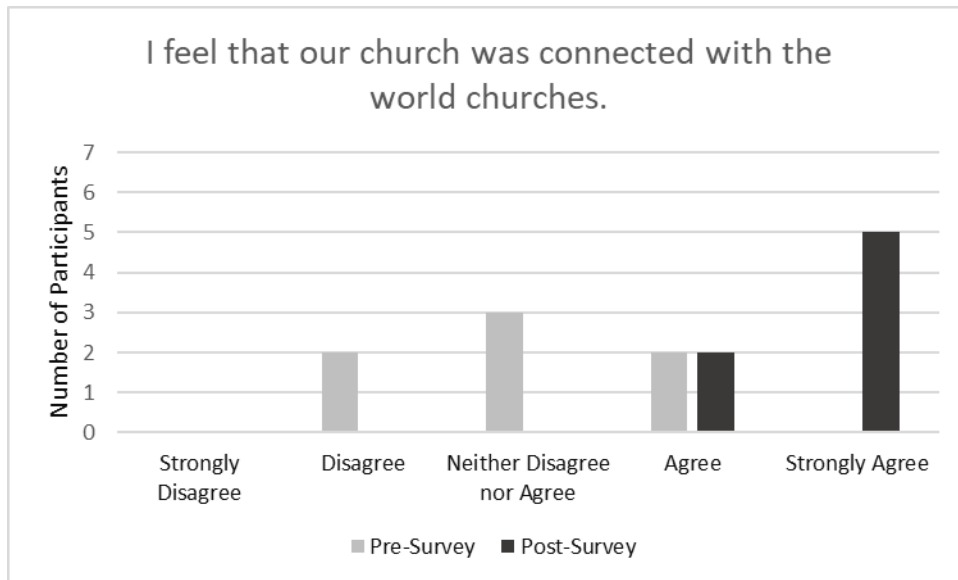


Figure 8. Pre- and post-project survey results of question 8.

Personal Interview Results

The questions I asked on the Personal Interview Questionnaire were intended to dig deep into the subject matter of my project with the participants. These open-ended questions made the participants think through the subject matter so that I could use their answers to assess whether my hypothesis was confirmed in my ministry context. I asked five questions to the seven participants.

The first personal interview question evaluated my problem statement by asking about whether the participants feel anxiety about the church's future existence due to economic, political, pandemic, and social factors that hinder the church's numerical growth. The question asked was, "Do you feel anxiety about the church's future existence? If so, where do you think that anxiety comes from?" The participants said,

Sometimes I feel anxious that the church is going to fail. This anxiety usually comes when there is no hope in the church, especially when there is no hope among the members.

I was anxious about the situation before the denominational disaffiliation because the pastor left and many members left.

After the denominational disaffiliation, there was also the issue of selling the building, which fell through, and I was worried that people's ideas were so different that they would not be able to go together, especially in a situation where EM (English Ministry) and KM (Korean Ministry) were not united.

I think the declining numbers, frequent staff changes, no one to do the work, and financial difficulties have contributed to my anxiety.

I think the denominational disaffiliation and the sale of the church building has made the congregation anxious about not having a building.

I have anxiety about church growth. Will our church grow?

As I watched the numbers decline, I was a little worried about what would happen to the church if I stopped attending.

The answers to the first personal interview question revealed that all seven participants were, to varying degrees, anxious about the future of their church. The reasons cited for this anxiety were “lack of hope for the church,” “many members left,” “the congregation was not united,” “financial difficulties,” and “the church was up for sale.” Many of the participants referred to the denominational disaffiliation process from The United Methodist Church as contributing to their anxieties.

The second personal interview question evaluated my hypothesis in relation to ecclesiology by assessing changes in participants’ knowledge and understanding of the church, from local perspective to global perspective, as a result of the project. I asked the participants, “Has your understanding of the church or perspective of your church changed after intercessory prayer training? If so, describe how.” The participants said,

I used to think of the church as a community. I thought and understood that it is necessary for the church to emphasize the spiritual part, but it should also serve as a community that makes coming to church fun. After the intercessory prayer training, I realized that community is important, but God's plan for the church is more important, and it's not just our community, it's the world church. I realized

that the churches are connected. My understanding and perspective of the church was centered on my church, but I realized that we are a part of the global church.

I realized that even if we have the same situation, it is important to know what God is saying in these situations and what God wants. After the intercessory prayer training, my perspective changed to God's perspective. I hadn't thought much about how the church should work on missions when I thought about it in general. I had thought that God was just our God, but then I realized that God is not just our God, but the God of the nations. I thought that I had to do things in my church's favor, but I realized that there is one God and the church of the nations is the church of the same God. The concept of the church, which was local, became global. I think the project opened my eyes, changed my perspective, and gave me hope for the future of the church. It made me think about what God wants to do through our church in the world church even though we are small in number. I think this seminar served as an eye opener for me.

My idea of church has changed a lot. Before the intercessory prayer training, I thought that a church was just a place where people gathered...not necessarily believers, but people come for various reasons, such as a meeting place in immigrant life. After the intercessory prayer training, I realized that a church is not just a place where people gather...it's not just a building, it's not just a place where people gather, it's a faith community of people who believe in Jesus Christ as their Savior.

I became convinced that the head of the church is Christ, rather than the general concept of the church as a building.

After the intercessory prayer training, my understanding of the church changed. I learned the biblical ecclesiology that the church is a house of prayer for all nations, not just a place where we gather on Sunday, worship, eat, and leave. And when we had the intercessory prayer meeting in the last week, even though there weren't many people in the church, we gathered together in the sanctuary and prayed, and I realized that no matter what happens, the church needs to gather and pray, and I think that means a lot.

I had heard and known that a church is not just a building. After the intercessory prayer training, I was given a biblical and theologically specific definition of the church, and I feel like I have a framework.

I realized more and more that the church is not a building, but a community of faith, a gathering of believers. I realized that as long as we get the identity of the church right, biblically and theologically, we're good to go.

The answers to the second personal interview question revealed that their identity of the church, their understanding of the church, and their concept of the church changed for all seven participants as a result of the project. Most of the participants thought that the church was just a community of people, namely Korean immigrants with or without faith in Christ. However, after the project, all of the participants gained a biblical and theological understanding and concept of the church and correctly realized that the church is a community of faith, and the head of the church is Jesus Christ.

The third personal interview question was to evaluate my hypothesis in relation to the ecclesiology by assessing the participants' awareness of their role as a praying church in the global faith community and changes in the participants' thoughts about the role of church after the project. I asked the participants, "What role do you think your church plays in the world church? As you prayed for the world churches and missionaries during the sessions, did your thoughts about the role of our church in the world church change? If so, describe how." The participants said,

Before the intercessory prayer training, I don't think I made that connection. Before the project, I never really thought about the role of our church in the global church. I thought that what we do is for us, and we serve our community. After the intercessory prayer training, I'm still not sure what our role is, but I'm starting to think about the role our church plays in the global church.

When Jesus was angry with the Jerusalem church for not doing its job, I wondered what Jesus would think if he saw our church now. I realized that Jesus is not happy with us. Before, I didn't think that we should do anything outside the church, and we didn't do a lot of those things, but I thought that we should do it with the perspective of the kingdom of God in the world church. I want to share this with the leaders, and I think that we should do a lot of things with the focus of the kingdom of God in the church in the future.

Before the intercessory prayer training, I never thought about the role my church played in the global church. As far as I was concerned, KEMC-MN was a frog in a well. I think a lot of us in the church tended to think that everything was there for us. I think I went to church just to serve the children, and I think I was just a

person who prayed for myself. After the intercessory prayer training, I think I had a vision, and I realized that I needed to work on my intercession.

I think we need to open our ears to news from the nations, share it, and intercede for the nations.

As I learned to intercede, I learned that I needed to listen to God's voice and do it, and I realized that the KEMC-MN needs to intercede properly for the nations and the world church within the world church.

After the intercessory prayer training, I think KEMC-MN should move towards mission as a Korean immigrant church in the United States.

Even though we are a small group, I have found it valuable to pray for the nations and the global church.

The answers to the third personal interview question revealed that most of the participants had not really thought about the role of the KEMC-MN in the global church before the project. After the project, they realized that even though the church is small in numbers, it has a role to play in intercession for the nations and the global church.

The fourth personal interview question was to evaluate my hypothesis in relation to the ecclesiology by assessing changes in the participants' thoughts and perspectives about interceding for the world churches and missionaries as a church. I asked the participants, "What changes, if any, have you experienced in your heart while interceding for the world churches and missionaries?" The participants said,

At the end of each session, when we shared the situation in each nation and prayed for the church in that nation, it occurred to me that we have been one of those people who have been living without much concern for what is happening in the world, and I realized that God doesn't want me to just pray for myself. As I prayed for the nations and people who are struggling, I thought, if my heart is hurting this much, how much more must God's heart be hurting?

I realized that intercession doesn't start with me, it starts with God, and I came to really value the intercessory prayer meetings. In the intercessory prayer time, I thought a lot about the world church, and I came to value seeking God's will in the midst of it.

Originally, I didn't care much about the nations and the world church, but as I interceded for the nations and the world church, I became a little more interested.

Praying for other nations is something I've always done, but after learning about what intercession is and why we do it, I realized that I needed to be more intentional about listening to what God is saying, not just opening my mouth. My perspective on prayer has changed from my perspective to God's perspective.

I think I have changed from passive to active, from passive to active in my intercession. I think I have become interested in the nations and the world church because of my intercession.

What I never thought about was, what does God want? How does God feel when He looks at that country and those people? I learned that it's important to ask God, "What do you want me to pray for?" I think it changed the center of my prayers to God. I feel like my prayers have shifted from my focus to God's focus, and I feel like my anxiety is gone and my mind is at ease.

I didn't suddenly love the world church, but the words that I would love it if I prayed approached my heart a lot, and I felt that I should embrace the nations and the world church. I thought that if I continued to intercede, even as a training, I would be able to embrace and love God's heart for the nations.

The answers to the fourth personal interview question revealed that all the participants experienced a change in their hearts as they interceded for the nations, the world churches, and missionaries. Most of the participants were not very interested in the nations and the world churches before the project, but as we shared news from the nations and interceded for the nations, churches, and missionaries in each session, they became interested. And as they interceded, they began to understand God's heart for the nations and the global church.

The fifth personal interview question was to evaluate my hypothesis by assessing changes in the participants' anxiety level about the future of the church caused by the influence of changes in the environment from outside factors after the project. I asked the

participants “Has intercession changed your anxiety about the future of your church?

Please explain.” The participants said,

Through the intercessory prayer training, I realized that when I don't understand the nature of the church and focus on the problems of the church, my anxiety increases. When I focus on the kingdom of God, my anxiety decreases.

My anxiety hasn't been completely resolved, but I feel like I have a glimmer of hope. Learning more about the church's identity and its role has given me hope for its future.

It's hard to say how my anxiety has changed, but my anxiety has decreased as my thinking has changed. The lectures made me think a lot about the role of the church. I have been busy and pressed to solve the problems of the church every week, but in the back of my mind, I have been questioning whether this is the right way to go. As I learned more about the definition of the church and its role through the intercessory prayer training, my anxiety decreased as I realized that God was leading us.

Listening to God's voice and seeking His will has changed the way I think about situations. I feel like I have found a way to reduce my anxiety. Being able to share prayer requests and pray together to seek God's will seems to reduce my anxiety. Knowing God's will seem to reduce my anxiety.

As I listened to the lectures and prayed for intercession, I realized that I needed to move forward with hope in the midst of the difficult realities of the church.

As my ecclesiology was solidified through the lectures, I became more interested in qualitative growth than quantitative growth.

The answers to the fifth personal interview question revealed that most of the participants found that the anxiety they had before the project had decreased after the project, and the remaining participants found that while their anxiety was not resolved, they felt more hopeful about the future of their church.

Conclusion

The purpose of this project was to test whether my hypothesis was true or false for the Korean Evangelical Methodist Church of Minnesota. The goal of this project was to reduce the anxiety that the members of the KEMC-MN had about the future existence of their church by using intercessory prayer training to shift their focus from local challenges to the role of the church in the global church.

The results of the group discussion showed that all the participants had a good understanding of the content of each lesson and that their perspectives changed as the weeks progressed. The first lecture was to understand the church based on Mark 11:15-17, the biblical foundation of the project. The results of the group discussion indicated that the participants developed a good understanding of the biblical definition of the church, which is "a house of prayer for all nations". The second lecture was about the Moravian community and its intercessory prayer movement, which served as the historical foundation for the project. The results of the group discussion indicated that the participants learned clearly of the Moravian community's focus on the kingdom of God and intercessory prayer in the midst of difficulties. The third lecture was on an overview of prayer. The results of the group discussion indicated that the participants increased their understanding of the definition of prayer, the origins of prayer, the principles of prayer, the purpose of prayer, the nine types of prayer recorded in the Bible, and the five prayer postures. The fourth lecture was on ecclesiology, the theological foundation of this project. The group discussion result indicated that the participants learned the theological definition of a church, "a church is a community of faith, not a building." The fifth was

on an overview of intercessory prayer. The results of the group discussion indicated that the participants had developed a better understanding of the definition of intercession, the difference between intercession and ordinary prayer, and why intercession is important. The sixth lecture was on interpersonal communication, the interdisciplinary foundation of the project. The results of the group discussion indicated that the participants had learned the definition of communication, the process of communication, and interpersonal communication, and that they fully understood that prayer is a “two-way spiritual communication with God”. The seventh lecture was about hearing God’s voice. The results of the group discussion indicated that the participants grasped that intercession is about hearing God’s voice and knowing God’s heart.

The pre- and post-project survey results revealed that through six weeks of intercessory prayer training, the participants changed their understanding of the church from a purely local perspective to a global perspective, increased in their understanding of the role the church plays in the global church, and increased their understanding of the intercessory prayer. To the question on how they feel content or satisfied when they pray for others, world churches, or missionaries, the post-project survey result showed the change from 71.4% “Agree” to 100% “Agree or Strongly Agree.” To the question on how they have a clear understanding of the difference between intercessory prayer and other types of prayers, the post-project survey result showed the change from 57.1% “Agree” to 100% “Agree or Strongly Agree.” To the question on how they believe that intercessory prayer is important for their spiritual life and for their church, the post-project survey result showed that change from 28.6% “Strongly Agree” to 85.7% “Strongly Agree.” To the question on how they believe they hear God’s voice when they

pray, the post-project survey results showed the change from 14.3% “Strongly Agree” to 57.1% “Strongly Agree.” To the question on how they believe that God hears when they pray, the post-project survey result showed the change from 28.6% “Strongly Agree” to 71.4% “Strongly Agree.” To the question on how often experience a burden to pray for others, world churches, or missionaries, the post-project survey result showed the change from 0% “Strongly Agree” to 57.1% “Strongly Agree.” To the question on how they believe that church is not a building but a community of faith, the post-project survey result showed the change from 28.6% “Strongly Agree” to 100% “Strongly Agree.” To the question on how they feel that their church is connected with the world churches, the post-project survey result showed the change from 28.6% “Agree” to 100% “Agree or Strongly Agree,” and from 0% “Strongly Agree” to 71.4% “Strongly Agree.” In all eight questions there was a movement towards “Strongly Agree” between the pre- and post-survey results.

The personal interview results revealed that through six weeks of intercessory prayer training my hypothesis was confirmed and moved towards the solution of the problem I had identified in my ministry context. The first question (“Do you feel anxiety about the church’s future existence? If so, where do you think that anxiety comes from?”) revealed that all seven participants were, to varying degrees, anxious about the future of their church. Their responses included "lack of hope for the church," "many members left," "the congregation was not united," "financial difficulties," and "the church was up for sale." The second question (“Has your understanding of the church or perspective of your church changed after intercessory prayer training? If so, describe how.”) revealed that before the project, most of the participants thought that the church was just a

community of people, namely Korean immigrants with or without faith. However, after the project, all of the participants gained a biblical and theological understanding and concept of the church and correctly realized that the church is a community of faith, and the head of the church is Jesus Christ. The third question (“What role do you think your church plays in the world church? As you prayed for the world churches and missionaries during the sessions, did your thoughts about the role of our church in the world church change? If so, describe how.”) revealed that most of the participants had not really thought about the role of the KEMC-MN in the global church before the project. After the project, they realized that even though the church is small in numbers, it has a role to play in intercession for the nations and the global church.

The fourth question (“What changes, if any, have you experienced in your heart while interceding for the world churches and missionaries?”) revealed that all of the participants experienced a change in their hearts as they interceded for the nations, the world churches, and missionaries. Most of the participants were not very interested in the nations and the world churches before the project. As we shared news from the nations and interceded for the nations, churches, and missionaries in each session, they became interested. And as they interceded, they began to understand God's heart for the nations and the global church. The fifth question (“Has intercession changed your anxiety about the future of your church? Please explain.”) revealed that most of the participants found that the anxiety they had before the project had decreased after the project. The remaining participants found that while their anxiety was not resolved, they felt more hopeful about the future of their church.

In conclusion, post-pandemic and post-denominational disaffiliation, KEMC-MN still has a declining membership and still faces financial challenges. However, the data from the post-project survey and personal interviews prove that while the church's situation has not changed, the participants' anxiety about the future of the church has decreased. The participants had also moved from a local to a global mindset regarding prayer. These results fully support my hypothesis.

In the future, I hope to develop this project into an Intercessory Prayer Training Manual. This manual can be helpful to churches that want to start an intercessory prayer ministry, or to churches that have an intercessory prayer ministry but want to further train their intercessors. The ultimate goal would be for these churches to realize their place in the global ministry for the kingdom of God.

APPENDIX A

PARTICIPANT'S GENERAL QUESTIONNAIRE ON PRAYER LIFE

Participant's General Questionnaire on Prayer Life

1. Have you ever been taught how to pray?
1) Yes I have 2) No I haven't
2. If your answer is "Yes," where have you learned to pray?
1) From church 2) From a ministry organization 3) From a family member
3. Have you ever learned about intercessory prayer?
1) Yes, I have 2) No, I haven't
4. If your answer is "Yes," where have you learned intercessory prayer?
1) From church 2) From a ministry organization 3) From a family member
5. How long do you pray on average per day?
1) 10 minutes or less 2) 11 – 20 minutes 3) 21 – 30 minutes 4) 30 minutes and more
6. Do you attend prayer meetings?
1) Yes 2) No
7. If you attend prayer meetings, how often do you attend?
1) Once a week 2) Two or more times a week 3) Once a month 4) Two or more times a month 5) Occasionally
8. What percentage of your prayer time do you allocate to prayer for the world church and missionaries?
1) 10 % or less 2) 11 – 30% 3) 31 – 50% 4) 51 – 70% 5) 70% and more

APPENDIX B

PRE-PROJECT SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

Pre-Project Survey Questionnaire

With regard to your understanding of prayer and intercessory prayer, how much do you agree with the following?

1. I feel content or satisfied when I pray for others, world churches, or missionaries.
1) Strongly Disagree 2) Disagree 3) Neither Disagree nor Agree 4) Agree 5) Strongly Agree
2. I have a clear understanding of the difference between intercessory prayer and other types of prayers.
1) Strongly Disagree 2) Disagree 3) Neither Disagree nor Agree 4) Agree 5) Strongly Agree
3. I believe that intercessory prayer is important for my spiritual life and for my church.
1) Strongly Disagree 2) Disagree 3) Neither Disagree nor Agree 4) Agree 5) Strongly Agree
4. I believe I hear God's voice when I pray.
1) Strongly Disagree 2) Disagree 3) Neither Disagree nor Agree 4) Agree 5) Strongly Agree
5. I believe that God hears when I pray.
1) Strongly Disagree 2) Disagree 3) Neither Disagree nor Agree 4) Agree 5) Strongly Agree
6. I often experience a burden to pray for others, world churches, or missionaries.

1) Strongly Disagree 2) Disagree 3) Neither Disagree nor Agree 4) Agree 5)

Strongly Agree

7. I believe that church is not a building but a community of faith.

1) Strongly Disagree 2) Disagree 3) Neither Disagree nor Agree 4) Agree 5)

Strongly Agree

8. I feel that our church is connected with the world churches.

1) Strongly Disagree 2) Disagree 3) Neither Disagree nor Agree 4) Agree 5)

Strongly Agree

APPENDIX C

POST-PROJECT SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

Post-Project Survey Questionnaire

With regard to your understanding of prayer and intercessory prayer, how much do you agree with the following?

1. I now feel content or satisfied when I pray for others, world churches, or missionaries.
1) Strongly Disagree 2) Disagree 3) Neither Disagree nor Agree 4) Agree 5) Strongly Agree
2. I now have a clear understanding of the difference between intercessory prayer and other types of prayers.
1) Strongly Disagree 2) Disagree 3) Neither Disagree nor Agree 4) Agree 5) Strongly Agree
3. I now believe that intercessory prayer is important for my spiritual life and for my church.
1) Strongly Disagree 2) Disagree 3) Neither Disagree nor Agree 4) Agree 5) Strongly Agree
4. I now believe I hear God's voice when I pray.
1) Strongly Disagree 2) Disagree 3) Neither Disagree nor Agree 4) Agree 5) Strongly Agree
5. I now believe that God hears when I pray.
1) Strongly Disagree 2) Disagree 3) Neither Disagree nor Agree 4) Agree 5) Strongly Agree

6. I now experience a burden to pray for others, world churches, or missionaries.

1) Strongly Disagree 2) Disagree 3) Neither Disagree nor Agree 4) Agree 5)

Strongly Agree

7. I now believe that church is not a building but a community of faith.

1) Strongly Disagree 2) Disagree 3) Neither Disagree nor Agree 4) Agree 5)

Strongly Agree

8. I now feel that our church is connected with the world churches.

1) Strongly Disagree 2) Disagree 3) Neither Disagree nor Agree 4) Agree 5)

Strongly Agree

APPENDIX D

PERSONAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

Personal Interview Questionnaire

1. Do you feel anxiety about the church's future existence? If so, where do you think that anxiety comes from?
2. Has your understanding of the church or perspective of your church changed after intercessory prayer training? If so, describe how.
3. What role do you think your church plays in the world church? As you prayed for the world churches and missionaries during the sessions, did your thoughts about the role of our church in the world church change? If so, describe how.
4. What changes, if any, have you experienced in your heart while interceding for the world churches and missionaries?
5. Has intercessory prayer changed your anxiety about the future of your church?
Please explain.

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